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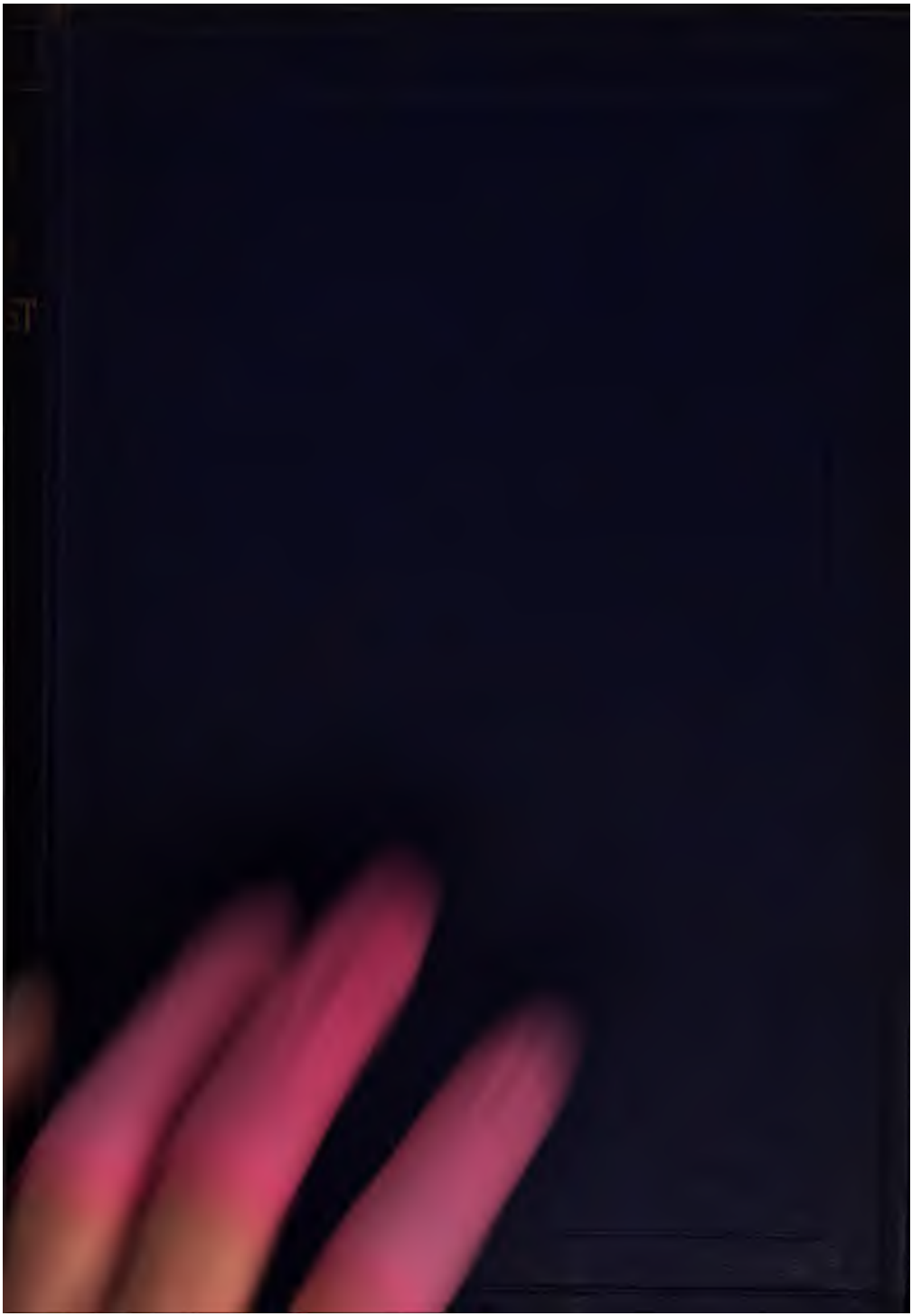

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OUTLINES

OF

THE LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

OUTLINES

OF

THE LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST:

With Critical and Expository Notes,

AND AN

EMENDATION OF THE COMMON CHRONOLOGIES.

BY THE

REV. LEWIS MERCIER, M.A.

UNIV. COLL. OXON.

CHAPLAIN OF THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL

VOL. I.

"Diligenter caveant tirones ne putent viros spiritu sancto afflatos sprevisse sermonem mortalium; sed meminerint potius, illam interpretandi rationem, qua nonnulli Theologorum utuntur, nihil esse nisi blasphemiam."—HERMANN. *ad Viger.* p. 786.

"Quin potius certissimum est, atque experientia comprobatum, leves gustus in Philosophia movere fortasse ad Atheismum; sed pleniores haustus ad Relligionem reducere."—BACON. *de Augmentis Scientiarum*, vol. viii. lib. i. p. 9 (Edit. 1827).

London:

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, LOW, & SEARLE,

CROWN BUILDINGS, FLEET STREET.

1871.

101. f. 368.

LONDON:
GILBERT AND RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

TO

WILLIAM FOSTER WHITE, ESQ.,

TREASURER OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S AND CHRIST'S HOSPITALS, AND ONE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE FOUNDLING HOSPITAL.

MY DEAR SIR,

WE live in times when both the veracity of the Holy Scriptures is openly impugned and their plain meaning distorted and falsified by men whose reputation for learning gives a factitious importance to their criticisms.

The danger to general readers consequent upon this state of things can scarcely be overrated. Scepticism is more popular with superficial thinkers than belief; for it is commonly taken for a mark of superior judgment and a higher intellectual faculty. And yet, in serious and candid minds, accustomed to accurate thought, and acquainted with the nature and value of evidence, the alternatives presented by the sceptic make infinitely greater demands upon our belief than the simple facts which he discredits.

It was under a strong conviction of this prevalent mischief that I was led to undertake the following work, which I now venture to put forth with great diffidence. And I dedicate it to yourself not merely as a mark of personal esteem, but because I know no one better able, by wide experience and extended sympathies, at once to understand the magnitude of the evil, and to appreciate any endeavour, however small, that is earnestly made to counteract it.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours most faithfully,

THE AUTHOR.

LONDON, *July*, 1871.

CORRIGENDA.

Page 36, line 7, *for* eight *read* eleven

— 53, — 5 from bottom of page, *for* April *read* May

— 127, — 12 from bottom of page, *for* coincided *read* nearly coincided

Head-line, top of page 319, *for* The Gadarene Demoniacs. *read* Return to Capernaum.

Head-line, top of page 320, *for* The Gadarene Demoniacs. *read* The Healing of Jairus' Daughter.

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DISSERTATION

ON THE PERIODS OF THE

Nativity and Baptism of Jesus Christ.

SOME apology is necessary for the adoption in the following work of a scheme of Chronology not altogether in unison with those most in repute at present. Little, indeed, need be said in reference to the rejection of the Vulgar or Dionysian Era. It has not the merit of even a very high antiquity to recommend it; for, although first employed in the beginning of the sixth century, it was not until the middle of the fifteenth that, for convenience' sake, it was finally adopted by the Christian nations of South-Western Europe. Indeed, so evident is the falsity of the year of commencement, that there is no theological scholar who now dreams of basing his views of Gospel History or Chronology upon it. And as to the *day* of the year; while all that can be said in its favour is simply that it is not *impossible*, there is yet the amplest ground for believing that it is highly improbable that it can be the true one. Any inquiry therefore into the true date of the Incarnation, i. e. the exact year, month and day (of the present style), may and must be conducted upon reasoning altogether independent of such empirical systems. It would in fact be almost unnecessary to notice the Vulgar Era at all, but for the fact that an American Divine, Dr. Samuel

Farmer Jarvis[1], has devoted an amazing amount of industry to prove that the common date of December 25 (though not the year A.D. 1) is the true season-date of the Incarnation.

The common year, month, and day of the Nativity may be at once and without hesitation rejected in favour of any date which the arrangement and order of events in the Divine narration may render necessary, or in accordance with the highest probabilities of the history. This order and arrangement, then, is of the first consequence in any attempt to fix with exactness an event of such interest and importance as the nativity of Jesus Christ.

That this is, however, by no means an easy task, is evident from the fact that there are no fewer than three hundred "Harmonies" of the Gospels in existence, all differing from each other more or less in their details, and in the views taken by the writers of the identity or distinctness between certain transactions reported by different Evangelists, which bear undoubted resemblance to each other. The result of such diversity of views is necessarily to create differences in the estimates of the time over which the ministry of Jesus extended. There are also many other points which are noticed in the course of this work, which contribute greatly to the difficulty of arriving at agreement and exactness. Such are the notes of time occurring in Luke iii. 1, 2; the question of the number of the Passovers mentioned in the Gospels dependent upon the meaning assigned to John v. 1; and the great difficulty of arriving at a correct knowledge of the form of the Jewish year in the distant period of the life of Jesus and his Apostles.

The variety of opinions which have been held upon the date of the Birth, the Baptism, and the Death of Jesus Christ may be understood from the following statement.

In regard of *the nativity*, there are variations of *eighteen years*

[1] "Chronological Introduction to the History of the Church." 1844.

lying between the *Termini* of A.J.P. 4691 and A.J.P. 4722. The month is variously assumed as January, April, May, June, November, and December. The days of the month are ten in number, and of the week, four.

Similarly, the *Baptism* of Jesus ranges over thirteen years, viz. from A.J.P. 4722 to 4752 as *Termini*. His age at that epoch, according to the differing views of the meaning of ὡσεί in S. Luke iii. 23, is fixed from twenty-seven to thirty-two years of age:—the period is variously January, Midsummer, and November; and each day of the week by turn is assigned to the event.

And lastly, a difference as wide as forty-two years again separates the estimates of the period of His *Crucifixion and Death*, eighteen different years being severally assumed for the date of that event, lying between the extremes of A.J.P. 4714 and 4756. His age at that great crisis of the world's history ranges from twenty-seven to fifty years, and the subordinate dates (fixed for the 15th of the Jewish month Nisan) vary between March 18—27, and April 9—20[2].

It is evident, therefore, that there is ample justification for any well-considered attempt to arrive at some determinate epoch of the Nativity. The basis of such an inquiry must be twofold. The first mode of procedure must be the *critical* one, by which the various events recorded in the Gospels are arranged according to their apparent chronological succession, and the requirements of their several times of duration. This must be ascertained strictly *from the Gospel narratives themselves*, when once adjusted in their harmony, that is, in their relations to each other. The aids in support of such an investigation must be the notes of time supplied by the Evangelical writers themselves: and these, it is well to observe, are far more numerous and precise than casual readers are apt to imagine. Where,

[2] See Patritius de Evang., vol. iii. Diss. xix. pp. 171—291.

however, as in some few instances, secular history touches the outlines of the Sacred Narrative, it is desirable that all such independent notices should be taken into account as throwing light occasionally upon the very concise and summarized statements of the Evangelists.

There is further a parallel view of the subject which must also be taken into account; and that is, the utterance of the prophetical forewarnings of the Messiah's reign. And of these, beyond all question, the great prophecy of Daniel (ix. 24—27) regarding the "*Seventy Weeks*" stands in the first place of importance. The two modes of inquiry must however be kept perfectly distinct in the mind, and in their treatment; otherwise there will be an inevitable tendency, unconsciously it may be, to force events into harmony with prophecy, against the weight of evidence and the requirements of true criticism.

The arrangement of the dates of the Life of Jesus may be made either by reckoning backwards from one fixed event, such as either the Baptism or the Crucifixion of the Christ, to the era of the Nativity; or conversely from the latter date (supposing that any of the three can be ascertained with approximate exactness) to the other two. Either process, however, presupposes that certain doubtful or disputed points, such as above mentioned, can be resolved beyond further question. The former process has been here adopted, it being assumed that the date of the Crucifixion is now, by the concurrent testimony of the best astronomical calculations, ascertained beyond all reasonable doubt. It is only necessary here to observe that in no case has the writer depended wholly upon *authority*, however great and justly respected. The investigation has all been independently conducted; and it is some satisfaction that, in most important points (regarding the dates especially of the Passovers), the agreement of his own calculations with those of such writers as Wurm, Ideler, Greswell, and Wieseler, has been

sufficiently close to warrant a conviction that the date of Friday, the 5th of April, A.D. 30, is the true date of the 15th of the Jewish month Nisan, the day on which the Messiah suffered crucifixion.

This then being regarded as almost beyond question the *Terminus ad quem* of the Great Life, it becomes a question whether any certain indications are given in the history, by which, the date of the Baptism being by the retrograde calculation determined, that of the Nativity may be also fixed; or whether the latter may be first ascertained, and the former derived by onward reckoning from it. At the present stage of the inquiry it must be enough to state that thus much only can be directly determined from the actual notes of time in the Gospels in reference to either event: i.e. the Baptism must have taken place at least seven weeks before the Passover on April 9, A.D. 27, and the Nativity must have occurred at least an equal, nay a longer, period of time before the Passover on April 11 B.C. 4.

For, in the former case, the Temptation, and the testimony of the Baptist, together with a double journey to and from Nazareth to Jerusalem (including a visit to Capernaum), is recorded. In the latter, the Purification of Forty Days, the visit of Magi, the Massacre of Bethlehem, and the Death of Herod, with its seven days of mourning, and the rejoicings for the accession of Archelaus, had intervened before the date of the same Great Festival of the Passover.

For a more precise determination of the period of either event, recourse must be had to other and different modes of calculation. At present all that can be asserted is that Jesus could not have been born *later* than the 28th of February, B.C. 4, though He might have been born some months *before* that time. As He was *about* thirty years of age at the time of His Baptism, and as He was baptized at least fifty days before

the Passover on April 9, that event must have taken place *not later* than February 18, A.D. 27. And, as there are four Passovers[3] indicated in the Gospels as occurring during His ministry (at the last of which He was put to death), the last Passover, synchronizing with the close of His life, must have been that of April 4, 5, A.D. 30, when His ministry had lasted some time above three years, and His life some time above thirty-three.

We come now to the consideration of the various dates and occurrences, upon which attempts have been made to found a chronological system, or to form a certain date as a *terminus à quo* of the Nativity.

These are mainly the following:—

1. The mention of the *course of Abia* by S. Luke, i. 5. For, if the date of the ministry of this priestly family can be ascertained, the birth of John the Baptist, and consequently that of Jesus Himself, may be approximately determined[4].

2. The Star of the Magi, Matt. ii. 1—10.

3. The statement of S. John ii. 20, that, at the period of the first Passover of Jesus' ministry, it was the forty-sixth year current from the commencement of the rebuilding of the Temple by Herod the Great.

4. The very precise statement in S. Luke iii. 1, that a certain event in the life of Jesus, commonly assumed to be that of His Baptism by the hands of John, took place in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, at which time all the following personages were in office:—

(1) Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judæa.

(2) Herod Antipas was Tetrarch of Galilee.

[3] See *in loco*.

[4] It is as well to note here, that Jesus was *not six months* younger than ··t a little more than *five*. The angel Gabriel was sent in the *sixth* pparently at its commencement. See Luke i. 24. 26.

(3) Herod Philip was Tetrarch of Ituræa and Trachonitis.

(4) Lysanias was Tetrarch of Abilene.

(5) Annas and Caiaphas were High (Chief) Priests; when John the Baptist, awakened by the word of God, came into the Perichorus of Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

These are the main points which have been relied upon as affording (especially the last) some determinate grounds for assigning the date of the commencement of the Life or Ministry of Jesus.

It is necessary, therefore, at the outset, to examine carefully into the actual bearing of the passages, and to determine their several values as data for a chronological system.

1. The first point to be taken in order is the evidence afforded by the periods, if they could be ascertained with certainty, of the twenty-four courses of Priests[5]. The point, however, cannot be decided with sufficient positiveness to build an argument upon. There is in fact but a tradition of the Rabbins in the Mishna to guide us regarding the time at which any one of the twenty-four was in office in any prior year. It is probable, indeed, that the truth may lie in the tradition, and the question will be considered by and by. But it cannot be made the basis of a primary argument here.

2. As regards the star of the Magi, it is obvious that no reliable calculation can be founded upon a phænomenon regarding the precise character of which it is impossible to speak with certainty. The utmost that can be done is, when its most probable nature and date of appearance have been determined, to apply it if possible to the corroboration of dates already fixed by trustworthy and scientific progress[6].

[5] 1 Chron. xxiv. 1—19.

[6] This whole question will be found fully discussed in Part I., Chap. I. See also below, p. 14.

3. There are no sufficiently reliable data in Josephus's history by which to determine with certainty the period from which the foundation of Herod's Temple may be calculated[7]. And even were his statements more precise, it by no means follows that that the forty and six years should be reckoned from the actual foundation. For it might be that the Pharisees dated from the time when Herod, having returned from his visit to Augustus in B.C. 20, announced his intention at the ensuing Passover of rebuilding the Temple, and commenced the preparation of the materials. The Pharisees in their argument with Jesus would naturally extend the period as far back as possible. It is unsafe, therefore, to build any theory upon so uncertain a foundation as a statement of this kind, not made upon Evangelical authority, but introduced into the narrative as a point in an opponent's argument.

4. If the very definite statements in S. Luke iii. 1 could be regarded as necessarily referring to the same period of the baptismal work of John as that alluded to in S. Matt. iii. 1—17, and S. Mark i. 4—11, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to adjust the transactions recorded in the Gospels between the Nativity and the Circumcision. But it is in point of fact, by the misapprehension of the true bearing of this most important passage, and by an error in the assigned date of Augustus's death, that the main difficulties have been imported into the subject. The recent investigations, however, of Wieseler have proved that the passage of S. Luke in question refers not to the first preaching

[7] Both Greswell and Wieseler have taken up this point in the endeavour to establish a precise conclusion. The former fixes the date at the Passover of A.U.C. 780 (B.C. 27) for the expiration of the forty-six years, which would corroborate the chronology I have laid down in this work. Wieseler arrives at the date A.U.C. 781. But his reasoning is fundamentally in error, from the false assumption that only *one* passover intervened between this conversation with the Pharisees and the last Passover in A.U.C. 783. Greswell considers the forty-sixth year as completed in the month Sivan, the first of which fell this year on the 26th of May. The words were spoken on April 5.

of the Baptist which is here assigned to the spring of A.D. 26; but to a later awakening of the Prophet's voice which took place in the autumn of A.D. 27, just before his imprisonment by Herod Antipas at Machærus. The full discussion of this very remarkable passage the reader will find reserved for the place which it naturally occupies in the course of the history. It is only necessary here to state that the catena of dates in S. Luke iii. 1 has no real bearing upon the proper epoch of the Nativity of the Christ. It will be shown in the proper place to what portion of the Evangelical history it really belongs.

We may now proceed to investigate the subject upon the principles about to be laid down. It is one not altogether free from many and formidable difficulties. But by far the greater part, and the most embarrassing of all, appear to have arisen from the over-learning of writers themselves, from the immense complication arising out of comparison of conflicting statements in secular works, and from the disingenuous way in which facts are distorted and bent (unconsciously no doubt) in order to force them into accordance with preconceived opinions, and preconstructed theories. If indeed the broad ground of the Gospel narratives be quitted, and the question be argued from the outside, any amount of difficulty and discussion may be introduced into the subject. That is not the basis upon which the present inquiry is sought to be established. *The Gospels themselves* must first be thoroughly examined for the actual notes of time which they supply, and for the facts of history which suggest the lapse of certain periods. In the majority of instances the date may be, if not exactly determined, yet fixed relatively to other events or transactions with a very closely approximate precision. Taking the epoch of the Crucifixion as now almost certainly determined, there ought not, with all the guidance and landmarks of the Evangelists to help us, to be an insurmountable difficulty in defining with the very highest

degree of probability, approaching almost to certainty, the periods of the Nativity and Baptism of the Christ.

Relinquishing, then, for the reasons above assigned, the endeavour to found any chronological plan upon any of the four dates which stand so prominently forward in the Gospels, it becomes necessary to examine into the indications of time which are afforded there regarding the events of the periods intercepted between (1) the birth of Jesus and the Passover of the year B.C. 4, and (2) those between His Baptism and the Passover of the year A.D. 27.

According to the scheme adopted by Wieseler, little more than two months occurred in which were comprised all the events connected with the Infancy of Jesus down to and inclusive of the return from Egypt and the settlement at Nazareth. For by assuming February [8] as the most probable date of the birth of Jesus, and the first days of Nisan [9] (end of March and beginning of April), that is the outside of the period which he has to dispose of. The consequence is that he is driven to say that "the 'flight into Egypt' can have been little more than a journey there and back again. For the parents of Jesus set out shortly before the death of the aged Herod who was already afflicted with mortal sickness, and returned to Palestine as soon as they heard that Archelaus reigned over Judæa in his father's room [1]."

Now the events actually recorded in the Gospels are the forty days' purification of the Virgin, and the subsequent offering in the Temple; the visit of the Magi to Jerusalem, and their adjournment to Bethlehem; the discovery by Herod of their secret departure; the consequent issuing and execution of the bloody decree for the massacre of the infants; the flight into Egypt; the death of Herod himself, involving

[8] Wieseler, p. 129. [9] Ibid. p. 51.

[1] Ibid. note to p. 138.

(according both to custom and to the positive testimony of Josephus) a mourning for seven days, and the subsequent address of Archelaus in the temple to the people. All these events, then, are comprised between the Birth of the Infant Jesus and the date of the eleventh of April, on which day the fourteenth of Nisan, the first day of the Passover, fell in the year B.C. 4. If, therefore, every single event happened in immediate succession to the preceding, there are here fifty-four days certainly which must be inserted, upon the most necessary calculation, before the eleventh of April B.C. 4.

The birth of Jesus, therefore, could not by any possibility have occurred later than the fifteenth of February in that year.

But what probability is there that all these events could have been crowded together into this brief space of time? It may be said that it is *impossible* that they could have been; impossible, that is to say, upon all the principles of calculation which must be adopted in such matters.

There are in fact indications that a considerably longer period must have covered all these events. The only reason, so far as can be discerned, for instance, why the visit of the Magi is placed immediately (viz. the very next day) after the Presentation in the Temple seems to be that it is taken altogether for granted that the passages S. Matthew ii. 23 and S. Luke ii. 51 refer to one and the same event. This being assumed, since St. Luke's account evidently refers to a return to Nazareth immediately after the Presentation in the Temple, it becomes necessary to suppose that the Magian visit, the Flight into Egypt, the order and execution of the massacre, and the return from Egypt, all occurred within three or four days at most, and that those days immediately preceded and followed the date of Herod's death. Here are Wieseler's words upon the subject:—"We therefore introduce the paragraphs in

Matthew immediately after the Purification of Mary. (*a*) The visit of the Magi to Bethlehem. (*b*) Immediately after this the Flight into Egypt, and the Massacre of the Innocents. (*c*) The return, not to Bethlehem, but to Nazareth. If we consider that forty days had already passed before the Purification of Mary, and that then Matthew's paragraphs (*a* and *b*) come in, it follows that Jesus must have been born at least forty or forty-five days before the death of Herod[2], which took place at the beginning of April. We should get a somewhat longer period could we conclude from Matthew ii. 14. 19, that the parents of Jesus reached Egypt before Herod died[3]."

So that Joseph had no sooner reached Egypt (after accomplishing a two or three days' journey at the very least) than the Angel hurries him back again; and in that short space of time Herod's obsequies are completed, and Archelaus established on the throne of Judæa, pending the arrival of the confirmation of his father's will by Augustus! Can any one for a moment believe that this scrambling, hurried contrivance is in accordance with the revealed deliberation in the execution of all the purposes of God, or in harmony with the indications of the narrative itself? Would St. Matthew have referred the ancient prophecy of Hosea to the return of Jesus from Egypt, if His sojourn there had borne no similitude or correspondence to that to which the original language of the prophet had undoubted reference? Could such a hurried touch at the confines of the country have justified the Evangelist in attributing the πλήρωσις of a remarkable prophecy to such a trifling circumstance? Or, it may be reverently asked, if so very

[2] The middle of February is the period which Wieseler evidently assumes for the date. In p. 142 he speaks of possibly being "obliged to push the date of our Lord's birth further back to an *earlier* part of February, and in the extremest and least probable case even into January."

[3] Pp. 141, 142.

brief a removal was all that was necessary to escape the jealous fury of Herod, would it have been likely that so long a journey should have been undertaken merely that their steps should have been instantly retraced? And how could all the circumstances connected with the death of Herod and the accession of Archelaus have been crowded into this brief interval of time?

But this is not the only nor the worst difficulty into which writers have been led by this gratuitous assumption of the parallelism of the two accounts of S. Matthew and S. Luke. It is altogether astonishing to find men of ability and learning occupied with disputes as to S. Matthew's ignorance of Joseph's original residence in Nazareth, and the difficulty of understanding his allusion to "*a city called Nazareth*[4]," which seems to indicate that Joseph had never (at least to this Evangelist's knowledge) had any dwelling at or connexion with that northern village. So long as we shut our eyes to the palpable meaning of words, and are intent merely upon supporting theories, or discovering imaginary difficulties, there will be no lack of absurdities such as these. Is it possible that men enjoying the intimacy (as did both Matthew and Luke) of many of the principal personages connected with their very brief accounts could have been in the smallest doubt, or led into the most trifling error, with regard to matters of such interest and importance as those which they undertook, under the highest sanction and authority, to narrate?

But, it may be urged, S. Matthew distinctly asserts that the visit of the Magi did take place "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa." His own words are simply, τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ γεννηθέντος ἐν Βηθλεέμ[5]. Now what is the meaning which naturally attaches to these words? What reason is there for

[4] Matt. ii. 23.

[5] Matt. ii. 1.

supposing that they have any chronological reference to the period of the Nativity? None certainly that I can discover; while I see every reason to believe the contrary. S. Matthew himself in scarcely an instance gives any intimation that he is paying any attention to exactness of date. It is not in accordance with the object of his Gospel, the mode of his treatment, or the turn and cast of his own mind. Even when he speaks of the *star itself*, which gave occasion to the inquiry of the Magians, he takes no notice of the time of its first appearance, nor connects it with any other event by which it might be otherwise determined. The leading, nay the only, idea in the mind of this Evangelist is that of the birth of the Messiah of the Old Testamental prophecies in the very village where, according to Micah's prediction, He must be born. To any one accustomed thoroughly and accurately to examine the language of the several Evangelists, and to refer it, as it should always be referred, to their several leading ideas and guiding purposes, it will be clear that the γεννηθέντος is utterly destitute of any precise chronological reference, and is solely attached to *Bethlehem* as the place of the Messiah's birth, as the son of David, in the city of His Father. It is not indeed to be denied that the manifest tenor of the whole passage, together with the clear facts of the history, belongs to the infancy of the Christ; but it does not so belong to it as to refer to the period immediately succeeding His birth. It remains to consider what indications there are of lapse of time connected with this period of the infancy of Jesus.

Upon examining the account of S. Luke, we find that Joseph and the Virgin with the infant Jesus, "when they had performed all things according to the Law of the Lord, returned" (ὑπέστρεψαν) "into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth[6]." These words are immediately subjoined to the account of the Presen-

[6] Luke ii. 39.

tation in the Temple, which closes (in the very verse preceding) with the statement of the thanksgiving of the prophetess Anna. It is impossible, therefore, to dissociate the two facts by any interval of time. The inference is obvious and certain that, as soon as the conditions of the Levitical law had been satisfied, Joseph and Mary returned, as they had intended, to their own village, from which they had been absent, perhaps somewhat unexpectedly, for more than six weeks, probably more than two months[7].

Now the narrative of this Evangelist must always be read with the distinct understanding that he was already acquainted with the Gospels of S. Matthew and S. Mark; and that, while he wrote for the information of persons *not Jews* nor inhabitants of Palestine itself, he also does not recapitulate, or (in general) more than touch upon, in passing, events already narrated by his predecessors. Those portions of the infancy of Jesus which had been omitted from the plan of the first Evangelist he supplies; that which had been already sufficiently recorded he passes by, always assuming that those for whom he wrote would be acquainted with the narratives of those who had preceded him in the accounts of the Messiah's history. He therefore, having related the circumstances of the birth and Circumcision of the Infant Jesus, and the consequent Purification of the Virgin Mother, closes his account with the return of the Holy Family to the city, or rather village, in which he had previously introduced both Joseph and Mary as residing. The journey to Bethlehem is thus an episode in his narrative, the point of view throughout being that *Nazareth* (see verses 2. 42. 51) is the dwelling-place of the young child Jesus[8].

[7] The journey to and from Bethlehem would occupy six days, and the family, considering the condition of Mary, must have started at least a fortnight before her expected delivery. Thus $14+40+3=57=8$ weeks 1 day.

[8] S. Luke has omitted what he knew to have been *already explained by*

The plan of S. Matthew's Gospel is wholly different and peculiar to itself. His point of view is also quite distinct from and dissimilar to that of S. Luke. In his mind, *Bethlehem* is the birth-place of the Messiah of Old Testament prophecy. There must the Christ be born, as the Sanhedrim unanimously declared to Herod when he demanded what was the divine declaration regarding Him. Pursuing the same line of thought, and following the same view of the πλήρωσις in Him of prophecy, *which had had nevertheless its first ratification in the earlier history of the chosen race*, he sees in the descent and recall from Egypt the true summons of the Divine Son, of which Hosea had spoken more than eight centuries before regarding the Exodus of Israel. Linked on to this as the cause of its fulfilment in the recall of Messiah, he hears in his spirit the words which Jeremiah in his prophetic vision places in the mouth of the spectre of Rachel aroused from her tomb at Ephrath by the cries of the mothers of Israel when her children were slaughtered by the soldiers of Nebuzar-Adan. All the great prophecies therefore of Isaiah vii. 14, of Micah v. 1, of Hosea xi. 1, and of Jeremiah xxxi. 15, were gathered round Bethlehem, "the city of David," as their centre of origin, the focus to which the spiritual eye of those who waited for redemption in Israel must be directed. Even when he speaks of the Angel's assurance to Joseph, he does not mention Nazareth as his place of abode, as S. Luke does in the case of Mary. The sole importance which Nazareth assumes in his eyes is that which it derives from becoming the dwelling-place

S. Matthew, that our Lord was carried into Egypt for fear of Herod, and at Herod's death (Matt. ii. 22, 23) came to settle at Nazareth; *Bede*, who thus answers by anticipation the objection that S. Luke's account is at variance with S. Matthew's. It is *supplementary* to it. S. Matthew states the reason why they did *not* settle in *Judea*, but went to *Galilee;* and S. Luke explains why they chose *Nazareth*."—Cp. on Matt. ii. 1. (Wordsworth's Greek Test., Luke ii. 39.)

of Emmanuel, when the dangers of his early infancy had been surmounted.

But how does this Evangelist introduce the journey of the Holy Family to this northern village? There is no mention of it as their habitual place of abode, as it is described by S. Luke. He does not speak of it as "their own city," but as "*a city called Nazareth.*" And his language is clear enough, if it be understood that Joseph and Mary had now for some time relinquished their former dwelling-place, and returned to Bethlehem as the most apparently proper and suitable abode of the heir of David's line, and probably indicated as such by the Divine appointment of it as the place of Emmanuel's birth.

For when the angel assures Joseph in Egypt that the danger to the life of the infant Jesus is past, it is clear that his first intention was to *return to Judæa*, not to go up into Galilee; for it was the tidings that Archelaus was king in place of his father Herod which alarmed him, and made him afraid to *return thither* (ἐκεῖ ἀπελθεῖν). And if he was intending to return into Judæa, what place could he have been thinking of as the end of his journey but that to which the Evangelist, by his previous mention of it, manifestly points the minds of his readers? The knowledge of the character of Archelaus, who shared the cruelty and tyrannical despotism of his father's disposition, determined him, for the sake of the Divine Infant, to seek some safer place for his precious charge. It appears from the language of the text (χρηματισθεις δὲ κατ' ὄναρ, v. 22 [9]), that, previously to deciding upon this step, Joseph sought counsel and guidance from God, and that He was pleased to answer the prayer of the pious man, and to direct his steps to Nazareth. That he went thither as his former well-known place of abode was but natural,

[9] As all classical scholars are aware, this term signifies the receipt of an oracular answer after consultation of the Deity. See Hales, Chron. p. 713, Forshall on Matt. ii. 22.

if he went into Galilee at all; and Galilee, under the sway of the milder and indolent Philip, was a secure place of retirement for the family. That in fact he went thither simply as an expedient, and as to a place which he had some time previously entirely quitted, is intimated by the use of the word ἀνεχώρησεν describing his movements. For throughout the Evangelists this word has the signification, not of *return* but, of *withdrawal out of the way* for purposes of security and precaution [1].

This being established, the order of events during this period may be assumed with safety to have been as follows: Joseph and Mary quit Nazareth, their dwelling-place, some days (perhaps a fortnight) previous to the Incarnation, and take up their temporary abode in the φάτνη of the Caravanserai, or Khan, of Bethlehem. They remain there until they have fully satisfied the requirements of the Levitical Law, when they return at once to Nazareth, in order to make arrangements for removal to Bethlehem (which appears now to be indicated as the proper home of the Messiah of David's line), and to take leave of their family and friends. This would naturally occupy some little time, at the expiration of which they remove to Bethlehem, intending to make it their future abode altogether. This would be the more naturally their intention, if, as appears likely, Mary had some landed property of her own in the

[1] Wordsworth (on Matt. ii. 22) adduces two instances to show that this term is twice used in the Gospels of simple *return*. The instances are unfortunate. The first is that of Matt. ii. 12. But what can be clearer than that the Magi were consulting *their own* safety, not that of the infant Jesus, by *withdrawing* another way? That of the Infant was otherwise provided for. In Herod's then mood, there would have been no security for the persons of the Magi, had he suspected them, as he manifestly did, of adherence to the cause of a Pretender to his throne. The other is that of Matt. iv. 12, describing the departure of Jesus into Galilee on receipt of the intelligence of the betrayal of John the Baptist into the hands of Herod. What more signal confirmation could be desired of the meaning here throughout assigned to the word? Why did Jesus depart from Judæa, but from motives of precaution? See in the text below, *in loco*.

place or neighbourhood[2]. Some little time after this we may place the Visit of the Magi, for the family must have had time to become sufficiently well known in the village for the inquiries of the foreigners to have been answered with such promptitude. The formula (δὲ) by which S. Matthew introduces the visit of the Magi is perfectly indefinite in regard of time, but rather indicates some considerable lapse of time than a near chronological connexion with any preceding event in the narrative. The order for the Massacre of the Infants and the immediate flight into Egypt, would follow within a few days of this visit. Perhaps three or four days from the summoning of the Sanhedrim by Herod would be the outside of that period. All these events, therefore, must have taken place before the death of the king, which occurred somewhere between the night of the 12th and 13th of March (when the Eclipse recorded by Josephus took place) and the beginning of April[3].

For, as the Passover this year (B.C. 4) fell on the 11th of April, and the seven days of mourning, as well as the harangue of Archelaus on a near following day, all preceded that date, he could not have died subsequently to April 1; even if, as is not probable, all these events befell in immediate succession. The date of Herod's death may, however, be more closely fixed

[2] See below, pp. 71. 109.

[3] Such, I am glad to find, is also the opinion of Dr. Wordsworth regarding this series of events. The following are his words:—

"It seems, therefore, that the sequence of events was thus,—

"Nativity.

"Presentation in the Temple.

"Return to Nazareth.

"Retu[illegible]thlehem (probably on the occasion of one of the great [illegible]at Jerusalem).

"Vi[illegible]

"Fl[illegible]

"Set[illegible]th." (Cp. Patrit. ii. 328—331.) Wordsworth

G[illegible]t. ii. 12.

than this. In his last illness, he was persuaded to try the effects of the salt baths of Callirrhoë, near to the N.E. of the Dead Sea. Finding that his malady was rather aggravated by the treatment he returned to Jericho, where he shortly afterwards died. Some short time, however, must have elapsed while he remained here; for, in order to ensure that the nation should observe a general mourning for his death which now appeared inevitable, he summoned all the principal men of the nation to repair to Jericho, under threat of death, where they were confined in the Hippodrome, in order that the moment of his death should be the signal for their massacre. The execution of this horrible design was entrusted to his sister Salome. At this period, letters arrived from Rome announcing that Augustus Cæsar was pleased to commit the punishment of his son Antipater, who had endeavoured some time previously to compass his death by poison, to his own discretion. He revived somewhat at this intelligence; but, a fresh paroxysm of torture supervening, he attempted to stab himself, but was prevented by the interposition of his cousin Achiabus. A false report of his death thus gaining belief, Antipater endeavoured to bribe his guards to release him. Herod, however, being promptly informed of the attempt, ordered his immediate execution. On the fifth day after the death of his son, Herod himself died, and Archelaus was proclaimed king[4].

There is some difficulty in assigning the time which elapsed between the death of Herod at Jericho and his interment at Herodium, where, according to his own commands, he was buried. Herodium lay between Jericho and Jerusalem, being distant from the former about 200 stadia, that is 25 miles; and from the latter 60 stadia, or about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Now

[4] Greswell attempts (unsuccessfully, as it seems to me) to prove that a much greater period of time must have been required for these events.—Vol. i. p. 304, &c. See Matt. ii. 22.

in one place (Antt. xvii. 8, 3), Josephus states that they went *towards* Herodium *eight* stadia in convoying the Royal corpse to interment. In another place (Bell. Jud. i. 33, 9), the same author states that the body was carried 200 stadia *to Herodium.* Hence Whiston (n. on Jos. Antt. xvii. 8, 3), has imagined that the funeral procession occupied twenty-five days, travelling at the rate of eight stadia (less than one English mile) per day. But it is observable that the words of the former passage only intimate that, on one day, the procession advanced eight stadia *in the direction of Herodium*[5] (ἐπὶ Ἡρωδίου), leaving it to be inferred that, for some reason or other, they purposely halted that day at that distance from Jericho, and that the journey was completed on the morrow. It may have been, as Dr. Jarvis thinks, that the first distance was traversed on the Sabbath day; for that was precisely the length of the journey permitted. The remaining twenty-four miles constituted the following day's journey, and that was the average of a day's work.

Now, upon these grounds, the death of Herod may be assigned with approximate truth to about the 21st of March. For, some days before the death of Antipater, two Rabbins, Judas and Matthias, whose pupils had cut down the golden eagle which Herod had erected over the great gate of the Temple, had been burned alive by his orders. That very night there was an *Eclipse of the Moon* which, according to the necessary calculation, befel at $2^h.\ 48^m.$ on the morning (after midnight) of the 13th of March.

The next full moon occurred on the 11th of April at $3^h.\ 32^m.$ p.m. This was the Paschal Moon; and the Passover would be eaten that evening, at the going down of the sun. Between these two dates, therefore, the following events have

[5] The site is that now called the "Frank Mountain," 31° 40′ N. L. and 35° 12′ E. L. from Greenwich. See Robinson, Bib. Res. i. p. 480.

to be adjusted; and here I willingly adopt as probable the arrangement of Dr. Jarvis[6]:—

The execution of Judas and Matthias . .	March 12.
The death of Antipater about	„ 16.
Death of Herod (five days after) . . .	„ 21.
Funeral ceremonies	„ 22—31.
Mourning for seven days	April 1—7.
Sacrifices and religious solemnities . . .	„ 8.
Public rejoicings for three days for the accession of Archelaus	„ 9—11.

Now as Herod was at Jericho when Antipater was put to death, and this event must have occurred some days after his quitting Rome for Callirrhoë, the Visit of the Magi must have taken place certainly not later than the beginning of March. It is most probable that it was *earlier than this*, that is, some time in February. For Herod's illness was of such a nature that, towards the very close of his life, he could scarcely have given audience to persons of their rank in a befitting manner. And yet that he was *not far* from his end seems almost intimated by the accordance of the Massacre of the Infants with the cruel execution of Judas and his companions, and that (however deserved) of Antipater. The circumstances seem to point upon the whole to the middle of February, as the probable period of the Magian Visit. At this time, as has been argued above, there is every reason to believe that Joseph and Mary with the Infant Jesus had been already resident for some little period in Bethlehem.

Now, when it had become apparent to Joseph and Mary that Bethlehem was the natural future residence of the Royal babe, they must certainly have returned to Nazareth for some little period after the Purification, in order to make their arrangements for removal, and to take leave of their friends and con-

[6] P. 361.

nexions. Less than three weeks or a month can hardly be allowed for such proceedings; and if (as seems certain) their after residence at Bethlehem had continued for a similar, probably a longer, period of time, we are thrown back into the *Autumn of the preceding year* for the Nativity of Jesus. He could not possibly have been born, upon the closest calculation, after the middle of December. It is reasonable to suppose that a longer period really embraced all the important events connected with the earliest period of His life.

To fix a time for this return of Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem, it is but natural to believe that a devout Jew, such as he was, would not neglect any of the solemn festivals of his religion. Such was now the Feast of the Dedication. For though it was, of course, not one of the Levitical festivals (dating in fact only from the cleansing of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus in B.C. 165[7], after the profanations of Antiochus Epiphanes), still it was observed by the whole Jewish nation with much reverence and solemnity, the festival lasting (like that of Tabernacles) eight days from the 25th of the Jewish month Cisleu. On this year the first day of the feast fell on the 25th of our December. It is natural, therefore, to place the return of Joseph from Nazareth at about a week or less previously to that time.

If this be the case, then there will have been a period of seven or eight weeks up to the assumed time of the Magian Visit, a month or so before the death of Herod. And reckoning backwards from the same date of December, allowing for the Forty Days' Purification and the return journey to Nazareth, we are referred to some time in the middle of October for the true date of the Nativity of Jesus.

If this be established, it becomes then a question what precise date, if any, can be fixed upon with any show of proba-

[7] See 1 Macc. iv. 59.

bility for this most important event. In such a consideration, then, it is impossible to overlook the great festival of the *Tabernacles*. For this would, in the year which we are now concerned with, have fallen upon the 18th of October. For the first day of the σκηνοπηγία, or the Feast of Booths, always fell upon the fifteenth day of the Jewish month Tisri. And, as the first of this month in this year coincided with our 4th of October, the first day of the feast must have befallen as above. The festival lasted eight days; and the only remaining question to be decided is as to the precise day on which we may be justified in fixing the actual date of the Nativity. This, if the general idea be correct, we can hardly fail to assume must have been the fourth, or the mid-day of the Festival, between the first day and its Octave[8].

It is in the first place remarkable that the term σκήνη is used in the Septuagint in the two senses of (1) the Shechinah, or Divine Glory of the Lord, and (2) the Booths or Tabernacles used in the Feast. It is a very striking illustration, therefore, of the truth that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt (properly *tabernacled*) amongst us, and we beheld His *Glory*[9]!" This feast was also the greatest (ἡ μεγίστη) of all the Jewish Festivals, and emphatically the season of joy and gladness, thus reminding us of the "good tidings of great joy," which the angels proclaimed to the shepherds at Bethlehem. The exceeding importance which was religiously attached to this Great Festival may best be understood from the language of Zechariah, where, in describing the coming ingathering of the nations into the Church of Christ, he denounces the anger and

[8] It is interesting to note that a tradition in the Midrash Rabba points to the expectation that the Messiah would be born in September. The probable origin of this idea may be traced to the belief that the world was created at the time of the Autumnal Equinox. The Autumn is also fixed upon by Hales, Chron. i. 201.

[9] John i. 14.

the punishment of Jehovah against "all the families of the earth" who shall neglect to observe this Festival[1]. It is difficult to see what the symbolical allusion can be here, except it be to the worship of Him whose incarnation that Festival witnessed.

It is to be observed that the *fourth day* when Jesus came up to this Feast[2] was the middle of the week, when three days and a half had passed, and three days and a half remained to go by to the close. These surely correspond in a very singular way with the week of years in the middle of which Messiah was to be cut off (Dan. ix. 26); for, although the rejoicings extended over eight days, yet the actual festival itself was confined to a week. The eighth day was a festival by itself; and, in marking the correspondence of the signs and the things signified, it is impossible not to recognize in the outpouring of the water of Siloam the foreshadow of the effusion of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

There are many other not uninteresting analogies and significances which readily suggest themselves when once the Season of Tabernacles is fixed upon for the date of the Nativity of the Christ. That date, as will have been seen, is not here assumed as a starting point in accordance with any preconceived idea or prepossession in its favour, but adopted solely as a consequence of the reasoning employed in the investigation. It may be thought, therefore, that this fact gives some additional credibility to the conclusion already obtained.

The arguments in favour of this particular date arising out of the correspondences and analogies already pointed out will be found set forth at considerable length by Dr. Wordsworth in his Greek Testament[3]. It is worthy, however, of remark that the view here taken of the date, arrived at perfectly independently of this learned writer's conclusion, is corroborated

[1] Chap. xiv. 16—19.
[2] John vii. 14.
[3] Note at the end of John vii.

in all essential points by the very able and succinct reasoning of Dr. Faussett in his work upon the same subject[4]. Those who have not made themselves thoroughly familiar with the singular adaptation of times and seasons, and the still more remarkable adoption of *numbers* as elements in the sacred history of the Jewish nation, can hardly be prepared to estimate the full force of an argument such as this. But this very striking element runs throughout the whole of Jewish History, especially that most momentous portion of it which is wrapped up in the Books of Prophecy; and no one can pretend to the character of a commentator or chronologist of the Sacred Annals who does not adequately perceive and allow its full force and bearing in his inquiries. For further corroboration upon this important subject the reader is referred to the passages indicated in the note[5].

Now if this be correctly reasoned, then Jesus was about four months old when the Magians visited Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and it wanted about four or five weeks of the date of Herod's death. The following may therefore, with every probability, be assumed to be an approximately correct synopsis of the chronology of this portion of the sacred narrative :—

[4] Sacred Chronology, Oxon. 1855, pp. 180—208.

The following note from Wordsworth's Greek Test. (on Matt. ii. 11) exhibits very clearly *why* the Visit of the Magi must have taken place *after* (and some time after) the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple :—

"The parents would not have taken the child Jesus to *Jerusalem* for the Presentation (Luke ii. 22) after the alarm of Herod had been excited by the Magi.

"Herod would not have extended his cruelty to children of *two* years old (v. 16).

"The flight into Egypt seems to have been immediately after the Visit of the Magi (v. 13).

"It is not probable that Christ should have been manifested to the *Gentiles* before His manifestation in the *Temple* at Jerusalem.

"Immediately after the Presentation the parents and the child Jesus *returned* to *Nazareth*.—See on ii. 23. Luke ii. 39."

[5] Gen. xli. 2, 3. Lev. xxiii.; xxv. 3—22. Josh. vi. 3—16. 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. Ezek. iv. 4—11. Dan. ix. 25—27; xii. 11, 12. Rev. iv. 4—6; vii. 4—8; xxi. 16—21. See also Wisd. xi. 20.

(1.) Jesus is born on the fourth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Tisri 18 (October 21), B.C. 5.

(2.) The Purification of Forty Days being completed, and Jesus having been acknowledged by the representatives of the devout proselytes and the Jewish nation,—on the following day, December 1st, the Holy Family depart for Nazareth, which they reach on December 4th—5th.

(3.) The Feast of the Dedication occurring this year on December 25th (the 25th of the Jewish month Cisleu), Joseph having completed his arrangements for removal quits Nazareth, so as to arrive in Jerusalem, four days before the Feast, on December 22nd.

(4.) The Festival being concluded on the 2nd of Thebet (January 1st), Joseph finally takes up his abode in Bethlehem, where he remains until after the Visit of the Magi, which may be placed about the middle of February.

(5.) Being then warned of God in a dream, he sets out for Egypt on the night of the third day afterwards inclusive [6].

The duration of the sojourn in Egypt is not stated in the Gospels, nor is it of material consequence to the history. That it was not, however, of that brief and hurried character which it is sometimes assumed to be, seems clear from the general tone of the narrative. Large numbers of Jews were at this time resident in Egypt; and no place could have been more appropriate or convenient for the Holy Family as a place of security and retirement. Coupling the fact of this visit with

[6] This is allowing one day for the rest of the Magi, and the following day but one for the discovery by Herod of their departure. Had it been postponed later, the tyrant would probably have succeeded in arresting them. Lange (on Matt. ii. 12) thinks that the Magi had already had their suspicions of Herod's real intentions aroused; and the use of the word *χρηματισθέντες*, rendered in the A. V. "warned," strongly confirms this view. See on *χρημ.* above, p. 18, and the note.

the citation by S. Matthew of the prophecy of Hosea, we may be prepared to expect that the visit was of some considerable duration. The children of Israel were in Egypt for a period of 215 years, and "appointing a day for a year" (Ezek. iv. 6), the Ark was that number of days, or seven months, among the Philistines. It may be supposed that, as these cases were symbolical in a great measure of the present sojourn of Jesus amongst the Egyptians, the period of its duration may be estimated at about the same length. In that case the family would have returned to Judea, and thence adjourned to Nazareth, about the middle or close of September.

That the sojourn was in fact of some length may be inferred from the way in which it is introduced in the narrative. Joseph on his return finds Herod dead, and Archelaus proclaimed king, tidings which were to some extent new to him. Of the former event he had already been divinely informed. The latter he only learned from the inhabitants of Judæa upon his return. Indeed, it may be observed in passing, that it was, in all probability, in Bethlehem itself that he became aware of the fact; for it was the natural place of halt for Egyptian travellers, independently of the other causes which would have directed his steps thither. One point only is to be observed, that the return to Judæa must have taken place before the return of Archelaus from the visit which he paid to Rome for the purpose of obtaining from Augustus the ratification of his father's will. And this could not have happened before the end of September, for the outward and homeward voyages to and from Rome, including a stay of some duration while pleading his cause before Augustus, must have occupied a period of some nine months. Now immediately upon the death of his father Herod, Archelaus had been proclaimed *King* by Ptolemy (Jos. B. J. 1. 33. 8). It is true that, out of deference to Augustus, he formally disclaimed for himself the title of βασιλεύς (Jos. Antt. xvii. 8, 4);

but there is no doubt that he continued to be so regarded for the present by the Jews.

"Archelaus was, no doubt, at the time of which S. Matthew speaks, styled *king*, the decision of Augustus on Herod not being yet received at Jerusalem; and the designation was probably continued in the popular language in preference to the term Ethnarch or Tetrarch, with which titles the Jews were not for some time familiarised [7]."

The adjustment of the Epochs in the Infancy of Jesus being thus independently completed, there yet remain three points to be considered, whose arrangement must be harmonized with this cardinal establishment. According to the sacred narrative,—

The birth of John the Baptist preceded that of Jesus by a little more than five months; and both John and Jesus began their ministries at or about the age of thirty years.

If, then, John's birth preceded that of Jesus by this period of time, he must have been born about the *close of May*. The conception, therefore, of Elizabeth must have taken place about the close of August. Reckoning more exactly upon the data already assumed, John would have been born on or about the 22nd of May, and the conception of Elizabeth must have occurred on or about the 21st of August in the previous year. Are there then any indications in history which can throw any light upon these assumed facts? In other words, can we discover the period of the service of the course of Abia in the year B.C. 6? and if so, have we any reason for fixing upon any definite period after that time for the birth of the promised Son of Zacharias?

It is stated by Josephus (B. J. vi. 4, 5,) that the burning of the Temple by Titus took place on the 9th of the Jewish month Ab, or Lous (August 4), A.D. 70; and the Rabbins assert that on this day the course of Joiarib (the first of the twenty-four

[7] Forshall on Matt. ii. 22.

instituted by Solomon) entered upon its duties. This statement is confirmed by the fact that, "if the first course began, according to Ezra, on the first day of the seventh month of the first year of Cyrus, the first course would again take up its ministry on the 4th of August, A.D. 70[8]." By simply calculating, therefore, the number of days from the one point to the other, and dividing by 168 (the number of days during which the whole twenty-four courses would have run out their periods of service), the whole cycle would have been completed by March 27, B.C. 6. And if the *first* course began on March 28 in that year, then the *eighth* course, viz. that of Abia (or Abijah), would begin on May 16, and end on May 22, B.C. 6.

It would seem to be taken for granted by most writers upon the subject, that the conception of Elizabeth must be determined by reference to this period; and that therefore from the time of the return of Zacharias to his own home, a duration of little more than nine months need be allowed for the birth of John the Baptist.

It appears to me that such a supposition is hardly worthy of much support. Such a date could only be a fanciful one. The true period of the birth of the Child of Promise appears much more likely to be in accordance with the analogy of such cases as those of Isaac and Samuel, to which the birth of John bears a very marked resemblance.

The birth of Isaac was promised to be at the end of "the time appointed[9]," and that of Samuel was said to be "when the time was come about" (in A. V.), or, as the marginal reading renders it, "in revolution of days[1]," both which terms refer to an annual period of time. A more striking and parallel case still is that

[8] Lewin, Fasti Sacri, pp. xxviii., xxix. It is, however, but fair to say, that Greswell (vol. i., pp. 383, 420, 434) calculated that the course of Abia would commence on Tisri 6th, and go out on the 13th. The calculation of Lewin, however, is safe, and therefore here adopted.

[9] Gen. xviii. 14. [1] 1 Sam. i. 20.

of the Shunammite woman "*who had no child and her husband was old*" (2 Kings iv. 14). The woman "bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life." The parallel passages here refer to the birth of Isaac; and the meaning of the time appointed is the same. It does seem therefore that, following the general analogy of the providential dealings in such cases, the birth of John the Baptist took place at such a time as was determined in the Divine counsels in reference to other and not dissimilar events. If this be so, then the birth of John may be presumed to have taken place about twelve months from the time when Zechariah received the vision and the promise; that is, towards the close of May, B.C. 5; and (to fix a special date) on or about the 22nd of that month.

Of the three points, however, already mentioned, the remaining two, viz. the dates of the commencement of the ministries of John and Jesus are far more important than the former one, and furnish a much more decisive test of the correctness of this chronology.

The words of S. Luke, in recording the Baptism of Jesus at the hands of John, are καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὡσεὶ τριάκοντα ἐτῶν ἀρχόμενος[2]. Whatever may have been said and written upon these words, they appear, upon critical grounds, susceptible of one interpretation alone,—"And Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age at the commencement of His ministry." And what *meaning* can the words καὶ αὐτός possibly bear, but that Jesus Himself *as well as John* was about that age at the outset? The passage does not indicate *by itself* whether either of the two was a little *more*, or a little *less*, than that age. And it is immaterial which way the course of the narrative may lead us to take it. For both the Nazarite and the Nazarene were out of the ordinary course of nature; and though they mani-

[2] iii. 23.

festly both conformed *in general* to the requirements of the Levitical Law, it is perfectly clear and certain that Jesus did not consider Himself as absolutely bound by the letter, when circumstances required Him, for the benefit of others and the security of His own mission, to override the strictness of the mere legal requirements. This is decisively shown by His own expressions (such as that of S. Luke vi. 5, that "the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath"), by His own conduct in healing and commanding burdens to be carried on that day, and by His refraining from prudential reasons from attending the third Passover of His ministerial career. It is even questionable whether He attended any other festival at all, besides those which are actually specified in the Four Gospels.

This, however, is a matter which more concerns our view of the date of the Baptism of Jesus. If John began to preach at the age of thirty years, it must have been somewhere about the 22nd of May, A.D. 26 (in accordance with the assumed date of his birth) that he made his first public appearance as a Teacher of the New Religion. Now, it is very remarkable that, widely as the Jewish festival varied in date from year to year (dependent upon the full moon on the 14th of Nisan), there was this year a difference from that of B.C. 5 of only *one day* in regard of the commencement of the Paschal Feast, and consequently of one day also in that which is here of more consequence to our calculations, viz. that of the σκηνοπηγία or Tabernacles. For in B.C. 5 the 14th of Nisan fell on the 22nd of April, and the 15th of Tisri on the 16th of October; while in A.D. 26, the 14th of Nisan coincided with April 21, and the 15th of Tisri with the 15th of October.

This being ascertained, if John began to preach almost immediately after his thirty-first birth-day (i. e. the close of his thirtieth and the commencement of his thirty-first year), he would have begun just one month after the close of the Paschal Feast on

April 27. But if, as seems indicated by the term καὶ αὐτὸς—Ἰησοῦς—ὡσεί, John was only *just about* that age, he may have begun a little earlier[3], so as just to avail himself of the arrival of the caravans coming up from Galilee and Peræa, about the middle of April to the solemn festival of the Passover. For during the early and late periods of his ministrations, he took post at Bethabara, or the "House of Passage" on the fords of Jordan, a station which he afterwards abandoned for "Ænon, near Salim," when the failing of the Jordan waters necessitated a removal to a locality where there was sufficient depth of water for the exercise of his functions as the Baptist. It is difficult to see why he should have chosen the particular locality of Bethabara, except for the advantage of the numbers of people who would pass necessarily by that ford on the great anniversaries of the national religion. For although people would be crossing there at all times almost of the year, yet the great influx must have been at those especial periods; and the solemn seasons of religious festivals must have been beyond all question the most favourable opportunities for exercising a salutary influence upon the minds and hearts of the people of Israel.

If this be so, then we may fix the date of John's first Baptism at about the 28th day of April, A.D. 26, when the people were beginning to return from the great national commemora-

[3] It appears to me that by this term ὡσεί S. Luke does most distinctly lead to the conclusion that Jesus certainly, and therefore John also, was not quite of the full age of thirty years at the time of their respective ἀρχαί. Had they really exceeded that age by some few weeks or months, it would have been enough simply to state that Jesus *was* thirty years old, any excess of that period having nothing of consequence about it to be taken into account. By thus qualifying the expression, the Evangelist seems to intimate that, though just about the proper age, there was some slight deficiency in the exact time, for some reason or other. And what was this likely to have been in either case, but the consideration of the Special Great Seasons of the Festivals of the Holy Nation, to which each was solemnly accredited?

tion, and he himself wanted a little less than a month of completing his thirtieth year.

So far, therefore, as this point is concerned, there is nothing to militate against the assumed date. At the same time it must be conceded that, so far as this particular case is concerned, it would matter nothing whether John's ministry began either in the spring or in the autumn. Nothing can be *decided* from this one point.

We come now to the commencement of the ministry of Jesus. Upon the supposition that He was born on (or about) the 21st of October, it will be necessary to fix a definite point for the commencement of his work, which shall coincide somewhat nearly (i. e. a little earlier, or a little later) with the assumed date of His birth. For He was (ὡσεί) *about* thirty years old when He began His ministry. It is clear therefore that He was *about thirty years* old on the 21st of October, A.D. 26. What then was the exact date of His ἀρχή or commencement?

Now there is but one day which seems here to stand prominently forward outside of the Feast of Tabernacles in which we have here placed the date of the Nativity. And that is the Great Day of Atonement, when the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness, symbolically bearing upon its head the sins of the Jewish nation. That this animal, and the ceremonial of which it formed the central figure, was a distinct and emphatic type of the vicarious offering of the Messiah, no one will deny. But the full correspondence has not, it would seem, been brought out, owing to the defect of the chronological schemes connected with this period of the life of Jesus. On His return from the Great Temptation, John, pointing Him out to some of His own disciples, as Jesus was approaching the spot where he was standing, exclaimed "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away (beareth? ὁ αἴρων[4]) the sins of the world." These

[4] See Hengstenberg on S. John, vol. i. pp. 77—79; cf. also Matt. iv. 6, xi. 29, xvi. 24; Mark ii. 11; Luke xix. 21, 22; John xix. 38.

words, especially as reported by the Evangelist S. John, as connected with this particular period, have a very marked significance. It is he who so distinctly declares the true ἐνσκήνωσις of Jesus at his nativity. It is he who thus points to the fact that Jesus was the true scapegoat of the Jewish Law. For, be it observed, at the great Paschal Feast it was immaterial whether the sacrificial animal[5] was taken out from the sheep or the goats. But when application is made to the Person of the Saviour, it is always *the Lamb* which is chosen as the purer animal of the two, *the goat* representing the incorporation of *the Jewish Law*—the *Lamb*, that of the *Gospel*.

Jesus, straightway after His Baptism, was led up by the Spirit into the Wilderness. He went there bearing the full burden of the sins of men, in order that He might make full experiment of the horrors of the kingdom of evil, in the varied temptations which it offers to the spirits and souls of men. As such, He went as the true scapegoat already solemnly appointed by John as the officiating priest, in order "to fulfil all righteousness." This was the first great type which was to be consciously perfected by the Messiah, and it seems that it was, upon perceiving this truth, that John suffered the Baptism to take place.

Some discussion has arisen as to the use of the word "*immediately*," as applied by S. Mark (i. 12) to the departure of Jesus under the Spirit's influence into the Wilderness. Hengstenberg (on S. John, vol. i. p. 130) would even insert the Temptation after the Passover in A.D. 27. But the natural signification is generally the more probable; and it applies with peculiar force to the constraining energy of the Spirit as developed in the mind of Jesus by the solemn act of consecration in His Baptism.

[5] See my "Eucharistic Feast" (Macintosh, 1868), c. 2; also Ex. xii. 5; Lev. i. 2.

It was on this very day, therefore, that His departure for the Wilderness may with reasonable probability be placed. Now the Great Day of Atonement befell on the 10th day of the month Tisri, which in this year corresponded with our 10th of October. If, therefore, Jesus was born on the 21st of that month, He would have been, as the Evangelist says, ὡσεί thirty years old, i.e., He wanted but eight days of that age.

Upon this supposition it will appear that the ministry of Jesus, dating from His Baptism to the Crucifixion, would have lasted (roughly speaking) three years and a half. It is no slight argument in favour of such an assignment of dates and periods, that such has been the opinion, however vaguely held, of most of the ablest Divines of different ages.

It only remains now to adjust the transactions noted by the Evangelist as intervening between the date of the Baptism and the first subsequent visit of Jesus to Jerusalem at the Paschal Festival of the spring of A.D. 27[6].

The Temptation itself, if according to this arrangement Jesus started on the evening of His Baptism for the Wilderness, would have terminated on the 20th of November. On that day the deputation of the Sanhedrin had their interview with John at Bethabara[7]. On the following day Jesus paid His visit to John on returning from the Wilderness. The day after witnessed the attachment of the first three Disciples, Andrew, John, and Simon. The next day, follows the call of Philip and Nathanael (Bartholomew), and on that evening Jesus set forth in company with the five for Galilee, which He reaches on the third evening from that date, and is present the same night at the marriage festival at Cana. There then intervenes a con-

[6] John ii. 13.

[7] The notice of this deputation affords strong confirmation of the fact that John must have been already some months before the Jewish public, for his work to have excited so much notice in the supreme Ecclesiastical Court.

siderable period, of which no notice is taken by any of the Evangelists, amounting to about five months[8], during which Jesus appears to have resided with His mother and family in quiet at Cana, which now seems to have been their principal place of residence. Towards the middle of March He quitted Cana; and with His mother, His brethren, and His disciples, paid a visit of no great duration (" not many days ") to Capernaum. This visit, there is reason to believe, was paid to John and his family, his father Zebedee being a person of some substance in that place: evidently (S. Luke v. 11) he was well acquainted with Jesus. This visit may be set down at about ten days' duration[1], at the expiration of which time He set out for Jerusalem seven days before the commencement of the Festival on the 9th of April[2].

The following therefore will exhibit the summary of the transactions of this period, chronologically arranged:—

A.D. 26.	Baptism of Jesus, on	October 10.
	Departure for the Wilderness on the evening of the same day	" "
	Deputation of the Sanhedrin to the Baptist	November 19.
	Return of Jesus from the Wilderness.	November 20.
	Visit of Jesus to John	November 21.
	First call of Andrew, John, and Simon	November 22.
	First call of Philip and Nathanael, and departure for Galilee	November 23.
	Arrival at Cana on the evening of the Wedding Feast	November 26.
	(Residence in Cana for five months.)	

[8] The expression μετὰ ταῦτα in S. John ii. 12 generally indicates considerable lapse of time. See iii. 22, v. 1, vi. 1, xxi. 1.

[1] Cf. Acts i. 5.

[2] That is allowing three days as usual for the journey, and four days for the arrival in Jerusalem, according to custom, before the Passover.

A.D. 27.	Departure of Jesus with His family and Disciples for Capernaum . .	March 23.
	Departure for Jerusalem	April 2.
	Paschal Eve, Nisan 14	April 9.

If it should appear surprising that there should be no note of any event of consequence during the stay at Cana, it must be remembered that it does not follow that Jesus was not actively engaged during that time. No doubt He was; but it would not have accorded with His clear determination of His work, to reveal Himself prematurely in public, and in the North. It is plain beyond question that His first public appearance is assigned by S. John to this great Paschal Feast; and it would have been out of keeping with the character and mission of Jesus to have given the first public manifestation of Himself elsewhere than in the Holy City and in His Father's house[3]. It may be inferred that His labours were at this time confined to awakening and strengthening that faith in Himself which had first germinated in the miracle of the marriage feast at Cana[4].

We have now reached a point at which we may quit the area of the Gospel narratives, and proceed to apply to this disposition of the Chronology of the Life of Jesus the test of the great Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel ix. 24—27. It will be desirable first to set down the words of the prophecy itself as nearly as they may be rendered in the English language, and then to examine their meaning and bearing. It is only necessary here to observe that the postponement to some indefinite future period of the latter half of the seventieth week, as well as Greswell's notion of there being a double ἀρχή of the weeks is to be set aside altogether. The Prophecy is one continuous throughout, and must be interpreted accordingly.

[3] See Luke ii. 49.

[4] Such is also the statement of Eusebius, Demonstratio Evangelica, Bk. ix. c. 8.

DANIEL ix. 24—27.

Ver. 24. Seventy Weeks are determined
Upon thy people, and thy Holy City,
To shut in transgression,
And to seal up sins,
And to cover iniquity,
And to bring on Eternal Righteousness,
And to seal up vision and Prophet
And to anoint a Holy of Holies.

Ver. 25. And thou shalt know and understand;
From going forth of the Word to cause to return
And to build Jerusalem,
Unto the anointed One, the Prince,
Are Seven Weeks and Sixty-two Weeks:
The street and rampart
Are restored and built,
But in straitened times.

Ver. 26. And after the Sixty-two Weeks
The anointed One will be cut off,
And there shall not be to Him,
And the City and the Sanctuary
The people of a Prince, the coming One, shall destroy;
And the end thereof will be in a flood,
And unto the end, War,
And desolations decreed.

Ver. 27. And He will confirm the covenant
To the many one Week:
And in the middle of the Week
Will cause Sacrifice and Oblation to cease,
And upon the pinnacle of Abominations
Shall be a destroyer,
And indeed until the desolation decreed
Be outpoured upon the desolated.

The meaning of the entire prophecy may be set forth as follows:—

A period of seventy weeks of years, i. e. 490 natural years, are assigned in the Eternal Decree to accomplish the scheme of Eternal Redemption which had been determined since the

foundations of the world. The date of the commencement of this period is the "going forth of a decree to restore (cause to return) and build Jerusalem." The close of it will see the veil of God's mercy thrown over the sins of men, and the inauguration of a period of righteousness, i. e. a period when men will learn to know God, and to be put in the way of salvation. Then a seal of completeness and of verification will have been placed upon all the precedent times of vision and prophecy bearing upon the great event; and One shall have been anointed who was the true Holy of Holies, the Temple of the Glory of the Lord.

This period of seventy weeks (or rather Hebdomads) is subdivided into three portions, which are manifestly placed in their proper chronological succession. These are—

1. A period of Seven Weeks.
2. A period of Sixty-two Weeks.
3. A period of One Week, which is further subdivided into two halves of three and a half days (years) each.

The first period of seven weeks will embrace the restoration of the streets and ramparts of Jerusalem during a time of much difficulty and anxiety.

After this period, another of sixty-two will elapse, making in all 483 years up to the time of the appearance of the Messiah-Prince.

For one more week, the Covenant which He will introduce will be in process of Confirmation with "the many" who will accept its terms; but in the middle of that week, that is, at the expiration of three and a half years from the close of the double period of $7+62=69$ Hebdomads, or $486\frac{1}{2}$ years from the *Terminus à quo* or epoch of commencement, He will be cut off, and "there will be none to Him." In other words, the original people will cease to be His peculiarly and above all others; for He will cause the

sacrifice and oblation to cease by the substitution of Himself as the true offering to the demands of divine vengeance for the sins of men[5]. Eventually the City and the Temple of Jerusalem will be destroyed by the soldiers of a future Monarch, and this end will be in consequence of a hostile invasion, by that Prince, of the country. That lofty Temple which had by that time, in consequence of its pollutions and the rejection of its rightful Lord, become a pinnacle of abominations, will thus be utterly destroyed.

The only uncertainty in the entire Prophecy is as to whether the last word should be rendered Desolaters or Desolated. If the former, the passage relates to the destruction of Jerusalem, which seems the true reading, as an amplification of the whole denunciation. If the latter, it must refer to the Romans themselves, and to the words of Jesus Himself, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled" (S. Luke xxi. 24)[6]. The critical view of the passage certainly favours the previous rendering, while it seems unlikely that the Prophecy should take so wide a leap as the latter must require, besides the fact that the words in S. Luke can hardly be made to refer to the mere fall of the Roman empire.

It now remains to arrange the facts of history in their order

[5] "The rending of the veil was not only an abrogation of the ceremonies which had been maintained under the law, but as it were an opening in the heavens, that God might now invite the members of His Son to approach Him with familiarity. In the mean time the Jews were admonished that an end was put to outward sacrifices; that henceforth the ancient priesthood could no longer be required, and that, although the walls of the temple might continue to stand, God was not to be worshipped there any more with the rites they had hitherto performed. The substance and truth of the shadows were now perfectly realized, and therefore the letter of the law was changed into spirit."—Calvin, Har. Ev., vol. vi. p. 322; fol. ed. 1667 (Tr.).

[6] Pusey on Daniel, pp. 184—188.

with a view to exhibit what harmony they bear to the words of prophecy by which they are here antedated.

(1) The first point then is the going forth of the decree for the restoration of Jerusalem, which constitutes the *Terminus à quo* for the arrangement of the several incidents and dates.

The question therefore to be resolved is, what decree is here intended?

Now there are only four which can be taken into consideration:—

1. That of Cyrus. (Ezra i. 1—4, and vi. 3—5.)
2. That of Darius Hystaspis. (Ezra vi. 8—12.)
3. That of Artaxerxes Longimanus in his seventh year. (Ezra vii. 12—26.)
4. That of the same Monarch in his twentieth year. (Nehem. ii. 1—8.)

Of these four decrees, two only, that of Cyrus and the former of Artaxerxes can be regarded; for these only were original decrees, the other two being merely confirmatory, No. 2 of No. 1, and No. 4 of No. 3. Again, the edict of Cyrus had reference only to the building of the Temple; this therefore cannot be the one intended by the prophecy which concerns the restoration and rebuilding of the City itself of Jerusalem.

There is therefore left only the edict of Artaxerxes issued by that Monarch in favour of Ezra the scribe in the seventh year of his reign, which can possibly answer the conditions of the prophetical allusion.

Artaxerxes Longimanus succeeded to the throne upon the death of his father Xerxes (Kshatra) the First in the year [illegible] B.C. The seventh year of his reign would therefore synchronize with the year 458 B.C. In the first Jewish month (Nisan) [illegible] year, and on the first day of that month, Ezra the Scribe, [illegible] received the authority of the King and his formal letters [illegible] Treasurers of the Satrapies west of the Euphrates, set out

for Jerusalem, which he reached on the first day of the fifth month, Ab (July-August), having occupied exactly the four months in his journey. Some date, therefore, in the year 458 B.C. must be assigned as the commencement or ἀρχή of the whole period of seventy weeks, at the conclusion of which the covenant was to be fully confirmed.

If the period of "seventy weeks" (or really seventy Hebdomads) be taken to mean exactly 490 years, neither more nor less, it would be impossible to fix the commencement of the period, any more than the duration, with exactness. For we do not know when the edict of Artaxerxes was issued from which to obtain the epoch of commencement. If again we assume the decree as given in the close of the month Adar, since on the first of Nisan Ezra started on his journey, then we are brought to the month Nisan as that of the Nativity, which cannot possibly be brought into harmony with the events which occurred between the Nativity and the Passover. As Ezra occupied four months on his journey from Persia to Jerusalem, it might seem not improbable that the autumn, when he actually commenced the work of restoration and rebuilding, was really the *Terminus à quo* which we are seeking. And that this season was the true one, and that the period of the Tabernacles was the precise epoch, seems intimated by all the circumstances of the history, and the requirements of the divided week.

But it is not necessary to rely upon such a supposition as this, for the prophetic term of seventy Hebdomads is, upon the face of it, capable of some slight expansion. The number of the Sanhedrin is called seventy, when according to the Mishna it was seventy-one or seventy-two. The Septuagint writers are styled always seventy, whereas they were seventy-two in number. The seventy disciples sent out by our Lord (S. Luke x. 1) are believed with good reason to have been seventy-two.

The same may be said of the Elders mentioned in Numbers xi. 16, and in the Vision of Ezekiel viii. 11. There are many other passages of Scripture, where a similar mode of expression is employed, taking the whole round number to the disregard of fractions. It is therefore antecedently probable that the seventy Hebdomads here mentioned would be stated in the Divine Revelation as *round periods of time*, to the neglect of any little overplus, which would be hardly likely to be mentioned in a declaration of such grandeur as that in the Vision of Daniel. It would in fact be almost incompatible with the prophetic construction of sentences. It is, therefore, perfectly allowable, upon grounds of analogy and dramatic propriety, to believe that the seventy Hebdomads are true round periods, and that the date of their commencement may be fixed upon the requisitions of history, altogether to the neglect of so small a fractional period as six months, or even more, if necessary.

The first subdivision of the entire period is that into seven Hebdomads, and this is characterized by the progress of the rebuilding of the City, until the whole work of the reconstitution of the Holy City was completed, during a stormy time of opposition from the Samaritans and other neighbours, and under circumstances of great consequent difficulty. Now we know (from Nehemiah ii. 1, &c.) that, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, Nehemiah obtained permission to go up to Jerusalem, for the purpose of repairing the breaches which had been made in the walls of the City, and of continuing the work of restoration and reformation amongst the people. This therefore was fourteen years after the first commencement made by Ezra. The work, however, was not finally completed until the time of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the High Priest. This latter personage died in the eleventh year of the reign of Darius Nothus, who ascended the throne in the year 424 B.C. There are thus forty-

five years of the forty-nine at once accounted for up to the *first* year of the High Priesthood of Joiada. It is but reasonable to believe therefore that the prophecy was literally accomplished in the fifth year of this personage. We have not the data for a nearer approximation, as the Book of Nehemiah closes at this point.

A period of sixty-two weeks now elapses from the completion of the work of Ezra and Nehemiah in the time of Joiada up to the public appearance of the Messiah. This period added to the seven weeks already expired gives sixty-nine Hebdomads, or 483 years up to that event. But from the year 458 B.C. we are led up to the same period in the year 26 A.D. as the precise date of the termination of the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks taken as separate periods in their order, the latter commencing immediately upon the completion of the former.

This being so, the latter week or Hebdomad of years must commence in or about the month of October of the year 26 A.D., and terminate in or about the month of October in the year A.D. 33. The bisection therefore of this period into two equal portions of three years and a half each must coincide with the month Nisan in the year 30 A.D., on the 15th day of which month, being Friday the 5th of April, it has been already determined that the Messiah-Prince Jesus was cut off by crucifixion, and the rending of the Temple Veil showed that the sacrifice and oblation had, in its obligation and efficacy, for ever ceased.

The periods will therefore be as follow:—

1. The Seven Hebdomads commence in B.C. 458, and terminate in B.C. 409.
2. The Sixty-two Hebdomads commence in B.C. 409, and terminate in A.D. 26.
3. The final Hebdomad commences in A.D. 26; the first

half of which (of three years and a half) expires in A.D. 30, and the latter half in A.D. 33.

For the conclusion of the seventy weeks, the following passages are worthy of attentive consideration :—

"Not *in*, but *after* those *threescore and ten weeks*, it is said, *Messiah shall be cut off*; *and there shall not be to Him*, i. e. as the context implies, the city and the sanctuary shall be His no more. Then follows the subdivision of the last week, or seven years, wherein He was to be cut off, since He *was* to be cut off, and yet not in the sixty-nine weeks. *He shall make firm a covenant with many during one week: and in the midst of the week He shall make sacrifice and oblation to cease.* He speaks not of a temporary suspension of sacrifices, but of the entire abolition of all which had been offered hitherto, *the sacrifice*, with the shedding of blood, and *the oblation*, the unbloody sacrifice which was its complement. These the Messiah was *to make to cease three years and a half* after that new covenant began, whether this was at first through the ministry of the Baptist or His own.—

"The City was devoted, the punishment irreversible; the Messiah's office would be, not with the people as a whole, but with *the many* who would be saved out of it, with whom the new covenant would be confirmed. The remaining three years and a half probably mark the time during which the Gospel was preached to the Jews, before the preaching to the Samaritans showed that the special privileges of the Jews were at an end, and that the Gospel embraced the world. We have not the chronological data to fix it[7]."

With this view intimately coincides that taken by Hengstenberg in his Christology upon this most important question[8].

[7] Pusey on Daniel, pp. 176—178.

[8] Hengstenberg's dates differ by three years from those here adopted.

He says (vol. iii. p. 240), "We have shown, that the last week commences with the public appearance of the Anointed One, that His death occurs in the middle of the week, and that the confirming of the covenant occupies the whole of it. All that remains to be done here, is to show how exactly the prophecy and its fulfilment coincide with reference to one particular point, the death of Christ. The terminal point of the confirmation of the covenant is, more or less, a vanishing one, and therefore does not admit of being chronologically determined with any minute precision. Suffice it to say, that in the few years immediately following the death of Christ, the ἐκλογή were gathered together out of the ancient people of the covenant—with what result we may see, for example, in the history of the first Day of Pentecost—and that the Gospel of Christ was then carried to the Gentiles; so that the Prophet could justly represent salvation as both objectively and subjectively finished at the end of the seventy weeks, so far as the covenant nation was concerned, to which alone his prophecy referred."

It only remains now to show whether there are any grounds for determining the conclusion of the seventieth week any more closely than the above cited authors seem to consider feasible.

The chief difficulty which confronts us in the endeavour to obtain a precise date for this *terminus* is the want of any fixed dates in the entire Book of the Acts of the Apostles. For it is to that work, and to incidental notices in the Pauline Epistles, that we must look for the grounds of our conclusions.

In the Book of the Acts there is only one precise date given, viz., the famine which broke out in the reign of Claudius Cæsar, just before the death of Herod Agrippa, and which had been prophesied by Agabus. Now the Christians of Antioch, being forewarned of this visitation, and knowing the poverty of their

For the answer to his and similar views of the question in this respect, see Pusey on Daniel, notes to pp. 166—169.

Judæan brethren, raised a collection for their relief, and forwarded it by the hands of Barnabas and Saul (Acts xi. 30). During this visit to Jerusalem Herod Agrippa died, and the date of his death is given by Josephus as occurring in the fourth year of Claudius Cæsar, that is in the year A.D. 44. At this time therefore S. Paul was in Jerusalem. Can this date be made available towards any more precise notation of the subject we are considering?

All depends upon the view that may be taken of the words of S. Paul himself in his Epistle to the Galatians. He says there (Gal. ii. 1), "Fourteen years after (i.e. after his conversion) I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also." If therefore this visit were the same as that already mentioned in Acts xi. 30, we obtain at once a corroboration of the date of A.D. 30, as the latest possible for the crucifixion, as already stated, and also for the conversion of the Apostle himself. There are then only two visits, with one of which this one in Galatians can be identified; the one already referred to on the occasion of the alms-bearing to Jerusalem,—the other that which is related in Acts xv., when Paul and Barnabas attended the First Apostolic Council in Jerusalem relative to the question of the conformity of the Gentiles to Jewish religious and ceremonial customs.

Now there are certainly some points of resemblance between the circumstances detailed by the Apostle himself in the Epistle to the Galatians as belonging to the visit in the fourteenth year, and those which characterized the proceedings of the Council described in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. And upon these resemblances many writers have founded the belief that this visit of S. Paul was identical with that which he paid on this occasion to Jerusalem. And yet the points of resemblance are hardly so great or so strong as the points of divergence. All in fact which lies at the foundation of the supposed identity consists in the fact that the question of the circumcision of the Gentiles

formed a subject of discussion upon each occasion. In the Epistle to the Galatians the Apostle speaks of going up to Jerusalem *by revelation:* and by the mode in which he introduces the remark, it would seem as though the fact, as well as the nature, of that revelation was understood by those to whom he was writing. If, then, he went up to the Jewish metropolis in consequence, as he says himself, of some communication divinely made directly or indirectly to himself, we naturally look in the history of the Church for some indication of such a circumstance, important as it must be in the life of such a man as S. Paul. Now in the Book of the Acts it is stated that the cause of the journey, which he and Barnabas took to Jerusalem with the alms of the Antiochene brethren, was a revelation made to a Prophet named Agabus, and by him published, of an approaching famine which would be generally felt throughout the countries of the Roman Empire (Acts xi. 28). It is difficult not to connect this fact with the allusion of the Apostle; and if the circumstances with which both stand connected are really the same, and I do not doubt they are, then the visit of Paul in the fourteenth year of his conversion was *not* that which he made on the occasion of the Apostolic Council.

Again, the one visit was marked by publicity (Acts xv. 4, 6), the other by a certain amount of privacy (Gal. ii. 2). The mere fact of the question of the circumcision of the Gentiles being entertained on each occasion is of no significance whatever. It was a topic certain to be mooted for years upon every fair opportunity, seeing how continually new converts were being made from amongst the Jews who, like even Peter himself, could never altogether divest themselves of national prejudices and predilections. But it is observable that, on the visit of the fourteenth year, Titus being a Greek was not compelled to be circumcised; a point to which S. Paul refers with evident satisfaction. This circumstance alone seems to point to the fact

that this visit was not identical with that of the council; for there would have been little reason to specify Titus's particular case, when the whole question had been fully discussed, and the point conceded in favour of the Gentiles altogether. If the Apostle went up on this occasion with the main object of bringing the alms to Jerusalem, it is quite intelligible that he should have held some private interviews, as he says, with some of the principal persons upon subjects of doctrine, and that he should have thus incidentally mentioned, as an important concession, the fact of Titus being exempted from the Jewish rite. This one circumstance indeed seems to stand out from the rest, as indicating the first symptoms of a struggle with national prejudices, which finally triumphed two or three years later in a formal resolution of the Apostolic body supporting Paul against the still lingering prepossessions of Peter upon the question of ceremonial observances.

The identification of this visit in the year A.D. 44, appears to me so important in its bearing upon the Chronology of the Gospels, that I have stated the case as fairly and as fully as I am able. Those who desire to see all that can be said upon the opposite view to that here taken, may refer to Professor Jowett's work upon the Galatians, vol. i. pp. 252, 253. It is worthy of remark that Paley in the *Horæ Paulinæ* (c. V. No. 2), seems unable to identify the two visits (Gal. ii. 2 and Acts xv. 2), in spite of a manifest tendency in favour of the supposition. Faussett's arguments (Sacred Chron. c. xi.) seem to me fair and reasonable; and I have consequently made them the basis of the previous argument. The reader will do well also to consult Lewin's *Fasti Sacri* on A.D. 44, p. 279.

Now if the foregoing argument be sound, it remains that the events in the Book of Acts preceding the year A.D. 44, must be comprised between A.D. 30 and that year. To enter into this question would be to enlarge unnecessarily the limits of this Essay. It must suffice therefore to refer

the reader to the eleventh chapter of Faussett's work, where the argument will be found stated at length. It seems utterly unnecessary to enlarge the period, of the earlier portion especially, of the Book of Acts, so extravagantly as many writers have done. The martyrdom of S. Stephen and the conversion of S. Paul seem certainly in the probabilities of the history, as well as from the general tone of the narrative, to have succeeded by a very short interval the event of the Pentecost of A.D. 33. It is perfectly gratuitous to assume any great lapse of time between the events. From the mention of the foreign Jews (Acts vi. 9) who were present in Jerusalem at the time of Stephen's death, it may be inferred that the season was that of one of the great national festivals. If this were so, then, as no mention is made of any other having intervened, it may be assumed that the actual festival was that of the Tabernacles in A.D. 33, when the first day of the feast fell on September 30.

At this juncture, according to Acts viii. 1, there was a terrible persecution against the Christians of Jerusalem. And it was at this time, if the indications of the history may be followed, that the memorable journey of S. Paul to Damascus took place, which ended in his conversion. It was evidently carried on with great rapidity as well as vigour; and the chief mover in the matter was Saul himself, whose name had already become unhappily notorious in the judicial murder of Stephen. That the persecution was mainly carried on by Saul, or at least under his directions, is provable by the fact that upon his conversion the persecution ceased. His sudden change of belief, and the zeal with which he now maintained the cause which he had so lately taken upon himself to attack and destroy, aroused the vindictive jealousy of his own party; and it became necessary for him, in order to avoid assassination, to retire by sea from Cæsarea Maritima to his own city of Tarsus (Acts ix. 29, 30). To the notice of this fact is appended a statement of his com-

panion and friend, S. Luke, that "then had the Churches rest throughout all Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified (i. e. consolidated); and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied" (Acts ix. 31). Can this statement refer to any other period than that which was declared in the vision of Daniel as that which should seal up the vision and the Prophecy?

Between the death of Stephen and the conversion of Saul intervenes in the Book of the Acts only the notice of the persecution of the Church and the preaching of Philip, commonly called the Deacon. This preaching was mainly confined to Samaria, where by this time the Church had taken root and was flourishing, as well as in the Jewish portions of Palestine, Judæa and Galilee. The notice of this portion of history appears to have been inserted by S. Luke, in order to show the completeness of the work which the Divine Master had imposed upon His Apostles just before His Ascension (Acts ii. 8). It is wholly unnecessary to suppose that any great length of time is required for this period of the history; for the Samaritans were already favourably disposed for the reception of the Gospel, and the events recorded in the eighth chapter of the Book of Acts are evidently an episode in the general history, inserted apparently with the object and for the reason above mentioned. It does not follow that the whole of Philip's teaching is to be inserted between the date of the persecution and that of the conversion of Saul.

"The three recognized divisions of the Holy Land are thus (in Acts ix. 31) distinctly and emphatically enumerated; churches had now been planted throughout them; their converts were multiplied; they were in the full enjoyment of spiritual comfort and external peace; the covenant was confirmed; the prophetic promise fulfilled[9]."

[9] Faussett, Sac. Chron., p. 254.

The result of the whole investigation may therefore be thus summed up :—

B.C. 6.	Commencement of the course of Abia	May 16.
	Termination of ditto	May 22.
	Conception of John the Baptist .	Close of August.
B.C. 5.	Annunciation of the Virgin . . .	Beginning of Feb.
	Visit of the Virgin to Elizabeth. .	Middle of Feb.
	Return of the Virgin to Nazareth .	Middle of May.
	Birth of John the Baptist . . .	May 22?
	Birth of Jesus Christ	October 21.
	Circumcision of Jesus	October 28.
	Presentation of Jesus in the Temple	November 30.
	Departure of the Holy Family for Nazareth	December 1.
	Return to Bethlehem for the Festival of the Dedication	December 21.
B.C. 4.	Visit of the Magi about	Middle or close of February.
	Departure of the Magi about . .	Three days later.
	Departure of the Holy Family to Egypt	Same night.
	Massacre of the Innocents . . .	Beginning of March.
	Death of Herod the Great . . .	March 21.
	Return of the Holy Family to Nazareth	September 21.
A.D. 26.	Commencement of the Preaching of John the Baptist	April 28.
	Baptism of Jesus on the day of Atonement, and commencement of the first moiety of the Final Week of Daniel's Prophecy . .	October 10.

A.D. 30.	Crucifixion of the Christ, and bisection of the Final Week at the Passover	April 5.
A.D. 33.	Sealing of the Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks at the close of the Final Week about the Festival of the Tabernacles	Close of October.
A.D. 70.	Destruction of the Temple under Titus	August 4.

Part I.

CHAPTER I.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT THIRTEEN YEARS FROM MAY B.C. 6, TO APRIL, A.D. 8.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

Zacharias in the Temple—The Vision of the Angel—The Promise fulfilled—The Annunciation of the Virgin—Birth of John the Baptist—The Nativity—Visit of the Magi—The Massacre of Bethlehem.

First Attendance of Jesus at the Passover.
(Note on the Prophecies of Isaiah and Micah.)

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. Luke i. 1—80.
S. Matthew i. 18—25.
S. Luke ii. 1—38.
,, ,, 39.
S. Matthew ii. 1—23.
S. Luke ii. 40.
,, ,, 41—52.

INTRODUCTION.

"Remember ye the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, (with) the statutes and judgments.

"Behold! I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."—Mal. iv. 4—6.

WITH these words the Canon of the Old Testament is sealed; the roll is complete, the voice of prophecy is silent. There is a pause in the calendar of Holy Scripture. No inspired writer

adds to its volume. Neither to prophet, nor seer, nor priest, neither by Urim or Thummin, not by voice, nor vision, nor dream, is the word of God made known unto Israel. The gates are closed. For more than five hundred years there is silence in heaven.

But as time passes on, and the hour draws near, there are symptoms of a making ready in heaven and earth. As in the world of nature, so in the economy of Divine Providence, faint streaks of light begin to appear in the East, little notes of life begin to whisper of the dawn; and, when the time has fully come, the Day-star appears over the distant hill-tops, and the Sun of Righteousness rises with healing on His wings.

ZACHARIAS IN THE TEMPLE.

Jerusalem, May, B.C. 6.

IN the month of Iyar or Zif (answering to our June) in the year 4708 of the Julian Period, A.U.C. 747, or the sixth year before that assigned in the common reckoning as the year of our Lord's birth, it fell to the course of Abia, the eighth in the order of King David's [1] arrangement of the Aaronic family, to conduct the daily ministrations of the Temple.

It was between the sixth and seventh hours of the day, or nigh upon half-past three o'clock in the afternoon of (probably) the Sabbath day. The evening Sacrifice had been offered, and the hour of Incense and of Prayer was at hand. The Senior Priest, upon whom the chief duties of the day devolved by lot [2], was a man advanced in years, named Zacharias [3]. He had

[1] 1 Chron. xxiv. 10.

[2] He was not therefore the High Priest: the High Priest did not draw lots. The attempt, therefore, to fix the date as that of the Day of Atonement fails. See Greswell, Harmony, Diss. 12, vol. i. p. 382; and Wordsworth, Greek Test. on v. 9.

[3] Zacharias was not really an *old* man, if, as there is no reason to doubt,

been long married to a wife named Elizabeth, who, like himself, belonged to the family of Aaron; but their union had been unblessed with issue.

It may well be that the holy duty now devolved upon Zacharias for the first time; for Priests were numerous in those days, and years even might elapse before the Service would come round in course to any individual. Full of holy thoughts he prepares for the evening duty. The great gong sounds[4], and, at the well-known signal, the multitude of worshippers retire from between the Porch and the Altar, into the side-courts and cloisters of the Temple[5]. There with covered heads they stand praying in reverential silence, until the Priest shall return to them after the offering of Incense. Nor may the Priest tarry long within the Holy Place. He must return and show himself to bless the people, lest fear take them that he has offered unworthily, and that fire from the Lord may have consumed him for his sin. For the Priest is the representative of the people; and the punishment of the Priest would be to them the symbol of a coming judgment upon the nation[6].

But the customary prayers have been said in silence, and the throng of worshippers look for the Priest, and yet he comes

the Levitical age for the duration of the Priesthood was still observed; for by Numbers iv. 23. 35, the duration of the ministry is fixed at from thirty to fifty years of age. There is some difficulty in reconciling the date of commencement with that given in Numbers viii. 24, but the limit is repeated in ver. 25 as that of fifty years. Elizabeth, however, was no doubt an old woman in the Eastern view, and, like Sarah (Gen. xviii. 11), the possibility of maternity had long ceased with her. Zacharias perhaps calls himself *old* in reference to the duration of his married life. But see Olshausen, vol. i. p. 87. Wordsworth considers this restriction of age applies only to the Levites. Certainly *some* light portions of the ministration were open to the priests after fifty, as is clear from Numbers viii. 26. But it is a point of no especial importance.

[4] See below, p. 58, note 8.

[5] Lev. xvi. 17.

[6] Olshausen, i. pp. 95, 96.

not! Fear and an awe come upon them, for such is not wont to be; and, as the minutes pass slowly by, men look anxiously and fearfully upon one another, as they do who dread that to which they dare not give a name.

At length he comes forth, a strange and altered man. The people press round to learn the cause of those weird looks, for his countenance is of one who has seen a vision that is not of earth. Agitated and troubled, he cannot satisfy their eager curiosity. He can but beckon and make signs, for he has indeed beheld that which was not of earth. His tongue refuses to perform its office; he can no longer articulate; the Priest is stricken dumb!

THE VISION.

ZACHARIAS had entered the Holy Place to perform the duties of the evening office. In front and in the centre before the massive curtain which veiled the Holy of Holies from his sight, stood the small gilded Altar, or Table, of Incense, surmounted by the plate of gold enclosed within its perforated crown[7]. The assistant priests have removed the ashes of the morning incense, and have brought, in a small golden shovel, live coals taken from the great Altar of Burnt Sacrifice[8]. Zacharias has lighted the lamps[9], and taken the coals from their hands; and, with low

[7] Exod. xxx. 1—3.

[8] "He that was allotted to burn the incense took a silver dish in which there was a censer full of frankincense, another took another dish, and went to the top of the altar, and thence took some burning coals and came down. These two must go into the Temple: now as they go, there was a great vessel or instrument, or what shall I call it? (they call it מגרפה migrephah), which being rung or struck upon, made an exceeding great sound.—It was a bell that they rung to give notice of what was now at hand."—Lightfoot. Temple Service, ch. ix. sect. v. p. 111. In his words on S. Luke i. 10, he speaks of a *little bell*. Possibly both were used in different parts of the Temple Service.

[9] Exod. xxx. 8.

reverence towards the Altar and the Veil, the two assistants have backwards retired, and left the Chamber of Incense in silence to the ministering priest.

Zacharias now lights the fragrant confection of four sacred spices, the use of which, save in the service of Jehovah, is death[1]; and as the divinely-ordained odour is diffused throughout the sacred apartment, lending by its fumes a mystic softness to the brilliance of the sacred lamps, he is about to quit the holy chamber. At the moment, on the right hand of the Altar of Incense[2], a form arrests his gaze, the form of an angel of Jehovah. Well may troubled thoughts[3] rise in the mind of the aged priest. Is the hour then at length at hand? Whence comes it that, after so long a lapse of time, the gates of heaven are again unbarred, and this awful visitant has come down upon the earth? Why has he come? Is it, mayhap, with a message of judgment to an evil generation?

But the Angel's voice breaks upon the silence of the Holy Chamber, and his words are words of heavenly benediction. "Fear not, Zacharias! for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name JOHN. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and

[1] Exod. xxx. 34—38.

[2] "I.e. on the south side, between the altar and the candlestick; Zacharias being on the north side, or in front of the altar, while offering incense." —Webster and Wilkinson's Greek Test., on S. Luke i. 11.

[3] Olshausen (i. 88) compares Rev. i. 17, Dan. x. 7. 12, with this and with Luke i. 29. The latter referring to the Virgin being "troubled" (διεταράχθη), may perhaps bear a different interpretation. Zacharias was not only troubled (ἐταράχθη), but "fear fell upon him" (ver. 12).

power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord[4]."

At last, then (for with God there is nothing impossible), the old man receives the Divine assurance that his prayer has been accepted, and that the yearning of so many years shall be satisfied.

Does then Zacharias acknowledge, as did Abraham of old, the Divine Promise, and give vent to his emotions in words of praise and thanksgiving? Strange that, in the spirit of Sarai, he should doubt the glad tidings thus graciously made known to him! Can it be true (he thinks)? Is it a vision from heaven that he sees, or has the solemnity of the place and scene, joined to the excited state of his own feelings, deceived his mind, and conjured an apparent vision before his bodily eyes? He is alone, ministering for the first time in the Holy Place of God! Can he be sure that he is not deceiving himself? Perhaps some such thoughts as these passed through the mind of Zacharias, when hastily he asked the Angel for a sign. He could not for a moment have doubted God's word, had he been assured of the truth and reality of the Vision before him. But the very fulness of his joy, and the sudden emotions of his heart, seemed to him a reason against trusting too implicitly the evidence of his senses. And Zacharias said unto the Angel, "Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years."

That this request for a sign was not altogether unwarranted is proved by its being immediately granted: still the character of the sign given equally shows that it was intended to be in some measure judicial and punitive. The Angel answered Zacharias, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God, and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad

[4] Luke i. 13—17.

tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season [5]."

With the Angel's words, then, fell the appointed sign. The power of speech passed away from Zacharias, the string of his tongue was tied, and he became powerless to articulate. And now too the Angel had departed! Suddenly as he had come, so had he gone! And forth from that awful chamber went Zacharias to the people, a silent, speechless man, with an awe upon his countenance which they, in their expectant anxiety, at once interpreted to mean that the Priest had seen a vision in the Temple, for he was mute when he should have pronounced the blessing [6].

The sign, then, we may observe, was twofold; partly immediate and punitive, partly future and remissory. And we should be unjust, did we judge the Priest too severely, by arguing solely from the visitation which befell him. His dumbness was not for himself alone, nor must it be considered merely in relation to his own doubts or unbelief, or in its judicial bearing upon himself. For in him, as the active representative of the nation, the national unbelief was personified and rebuked; in his dumbness is symbolized the withholding of the blessing from those that will not believe; and in the restoration of speech, at the birth of the great Forerunner, is typified the removal of the curse of disobedience, when the heart is once again turned "to the Wisdom of the Just [7]."

[5] Luke i. 19, 20.

[6] This is the opinion of many. Oosterzee, however, vol. i. p. 34, thinks that it is not established as a fact. Wordsworth (Greek Test. in l.) appropriately quotes Num. vi. 23—26, in which the formula of the priestly blessing is divinely given. See also Lev. ix. 22. It is true that what is there said refers to the High Priest alone; still in later years it is very probable that the custom was extended.

[7] See Wordsworth, Greek Test., on S. Luke i. 22.

Doubtless, when the assembled people saw that their Priest was powerless to give them the customary blessing, there must have been some among them who felt a secret dread of coming judgment in this silence of the descendant of Aaron! And it may well be that some few began to divine in their own minds that the Prophet's words were even now being accomplished, and that the Priest "held his peace in the Presence of the Lord God, for (that) the day of the Lord (was) at hand[8]."

THE PROMISE FULFILLED.

End of August, B.C. 6.

THE days of his ministry, however, were now over, and Zacharias departed to his own house in Juttah, a priestly village in the hill-country of Judæa[9], situate about twenty miles to the south of Jerusalem. Some little time (in all about three months) had elapsed since the Angel's visit, when his wife Elizabeth perceived that, in accordance with his mysterious promise, she was in a condition to become a mother. In the depth of her devout joy, and in recognition of her now honoured state, she withdrew herself at once from the society of family and friends. She felt herself now not merely freed from reproach amongst men[1], but entrusted by the Almighty Himself with a special charge for the salvation of the people of her race. For although unable to communicate by words the nature of his mysterious interview with the angel, Zacharias had evidently recorded for the in-

[8] Zeph. i. 7. See also Oosterzee, vol. i. p. 34.

[9] So think Oosterzee and Olshausen upon the best principles of criticism. The name Juta may have been very likely spelt in S. Luke's time as Juda. It is impossible that the reading "a city of Juda" can be correct. Juttah (Septuagint, *Itan*) is mentioned as a sacerdotal town in Josh. xv. 55; xxi. 16. It is still a considerable place.

[1] Isa. iv. 1.

formation both of the Priests and of his wife, whom it almost equally concerned, the written declaration of the cause of his sudden silence, and the nature of that promise of which it was the judicial sign and attestation. Elizabeth's withdrawal from the world was therefore the result of a religious feeling which caused her, by abstracting herself from merely worldly ties for a time, to leave it in faith with Jehovah to work out in her His Divine designs for the welfare of His people.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

Nazareth, beginning of February, B.C. 5.

FIVE months have now elapsed since Elizabeth secluded herself from society; and she is entering upon the sixth month of her pregnancy.

A second time since the closing of the Old Canon, the Angel Gabriel re-visits the earth with the message of Jehovah.

West of that northern Galilæan Lake which, with its neighbouring amphitheatre of hills, becomes hereafter the scene of so many works of Divine Love and Power, there lay upon a green table-land, just beneath the brow of a limestone hill, a small village called Nazareth (or in its Hebrew orthography—Netzer), signifying the BRANCH. This name may, perhaps, have been given to it from its retired position amongst the hills, where it seemed a kind of offshoot from the main trunk of the busier world without; or, as others imagine, from its comparative insignificance beside its greater and more renowned sisters of the towns and cities of Palestine[2]. Still it was a spot endowed in no ordinary degree with the gifts of nature. "Fifteen gently rounded hills, ' seem as if they had met to form an

[2] Another supposition derives the name from the profusion of low shrubs with which the hills are covered. (See p. 110.)

enclosure' for this peaceful basin; they rise round it like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion. It is 'a rich and beautiful field' in the midst of these green hills—abounding in gay flowers, in fig-trees, small gardens, hedges of the prickly pear; and the dense rich grass affords an abundant pasture.—'Nazareth is a rose, and, like a rose, has the same rounded form, enclosed by mountains as the flower by its leaves[3].'"

In this secluded village dwelt a maiden, named (perhaps, like many other Jewish females, after the holy woman of old), Mariàm, or Miriàm, which we have naturalized amongst ourselves as *Mary*. She was an orphan, of about fifteen years of age; and, at the period of which we are speaking, seems to have been living with an elder sister named Maria, who was already married to a man of the name of Alphæus, or in its contracted form Clopas, by whom she had several children. Mary was herself of the direct royal line; tracing her descent to David the King, through his younger son Nathan. She was betrothed[4], according to the custom of the nation, to a cousin of her own, named Joseph, who exercised the trade of a carpenter, or rather *builder*, in the same little village. Joseph, notwithstanding his humble station in life (though the practice of some trade was always an honourable calling among the Jews), was nevertheless the last male representative of the

[3] Stanley, Sinai, p. 365.

[4] Among the Jews, a betrothed female was regarded as the actual wife of the person to whom she was betrothed. The fact of Mary's betrothal has always been held, since the time of S. Ignatius, to have served an important purpose in the dispositions of the Almighty for the secret of Christ's birth. "The opinion of S. Ignatius was that the devil may have known from the prophecy of Isaiah (vii. 14), that the Messiah now expected was to be born of a Virgin; he saw that the Son of Mary was some great Personage; he heard Him called the Son of God (Matt. iii. 17) at His baptism. But Mary was espoused to Joseph, how then could her Son be born of a Virgin?"—Wordsworth, Greek Test., on S. Luke i. 27.

royal line of David, and the rightful heir to the throne, had Judæa been still an independent nation. For he also traced his descent up to Nathan, David's younger son, the line of Solomon having become extinct 580 years before, upon the death of the childless Jehoiachin and his brothers in captivity. Joseph and Mary were first cousins.

To this humble maiden, then, of the obscure village of the hills, it was given to receive the highest honour which God has ever bestowed upon woman. For she it was of all women of Israel, and of the world, who was chosen of God to bear that Divine Child, the very Immanuel Himself, for whom all mothers in Israel had longed since the day when Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarai.

Where the Virgin was when the will of God was made known to her respecting the birth of Immanuel we do not know. The tradition is that the Angel met her as she went to draw water from the well of Nazareth[5]. But the expression of the Evangelist seems to imply certainly that she was in the house at the time, in one of the women's apartments probably, where in consequence of her approaching marriage she would be living for the time in quiet and retirement. Her marriage in fact must have been very close at hand, as indicated by the chronological notes of the history; and indeed the angelic communication seems to have been made to her exactly at the time when it became necessary to anticipate her union with Joseph. There may have been many reasons for the delay in the divine annunciation, which it does not become us to inquire into. But we may be sure that the time chosen was the fittest and most suitable under all circumstances even for the comfort and security of Mary and her coming child.

The fact of Mary's journey to the South is of itself proof

[5] See Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 367, new ed. Also the article in Smith's Dict. of the Bible, "Mary."

sufficient that by that time she was already legally married. For under no circumstances were unmarried females allowed to travel alone among the Jews [6]; and there is no reason for supposing that, even under her peculiar circumstances, Mary could have waived considerations of propriety, and taken upon herself to break the custom of her people.

Mary remained at Juttah for about three months, in the house of Elizabeth. It was probably about the close of the second week in May when she left for her own home in Nazareth.

From this time we hear no more of any communication between the holy kinswomen. There was in fact no circumstance in the great narrative to come which called for any further notice of the relationship.

BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Juttah or Hebron. End of May.

WHEN Mary quitted the house of Zacharias, less than three weeks remained of Elizabeth's time before her expected delivery. Her husband was still dumb, bearing about with him the judicial sign of his own weakness of faith, and of the silence of the voice of the now expiring law of Israel.

The time came at length, and the word of the Angel was vindicated by the birth of a male child to Zacharias and Elizabeth, and the consequent restoration of speech to the father.

The news spread naturally through the hill-country of Judæa, for in that district the descendants of Aaron still dwelt [7].

[6] This is fully demonstrated by Hug, Gutachten über das Leben Jesu, I. 85, and his arguments are referred to as conclusive by Ebrard (Gospel History, p. 172).

[7] Josh. xxi 11—19.

"What manner of child shall this be?" was consequently the anxious—nay, fearful—reflection of many who thought perhaps that even in him, born thus in so strange and unusual a manner, they might behold, if not the future Messiah of Israel, yet that second Elijah, whose appearance should immediately precede His advent.

For thirty years we now lose sight of the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth. Consecrated to God from the very womb, the child grew into the man, a child unlike other children, a man unlike other men of the time, for the "hand of the Lord was with him." Early in his childhood, in all probability, his parents in the course of nature were removed; and John, having lost his earthly ties, and feeling the prophetic influence strong within him, retired into the unpeopled country called the desert or wilderness of Judæa. There, after the manner of that great prophet whose successor and representative he was designed to be to an ungodly nation, he made his abode in one of the numerous caves of the limestone hills, and found in the locusts and wild honey, and in the water-springs with which the wilderness abounded, sufficient supply for the needs of his simple appetite.

There, in close commune with the God of Israel, he prepared himself by prayer and fasting for the hour when it should be his mission to turn the hearts of the fathers and of the children to each other, in preparation for the "great and terrible day of the Lord."

Our attention is now called to an event in which angels vied with men in chanting the glory of God on earth. The mystery of 4000 years was about to be unravelled, the first promise to man fulfilled, the curse of the serpent to be accomplished.

When John the son of Zacharias was born, it wanted but a little less than four months to the delivery of the Virgin who should bring Emmanuel into the world.

The time was now at hand when, after the lapse of eight centuries, the words of the prophet Micah were about to find their accomplishment in the birth of Mary's Child in that little village of Bethlehem, whose only claim to notice lay in the circumstance that it was the birthplace of the patriot king, David.

Mary was still living with her husband Joseph in the obscure northern village which had been the home of her childhood.

There was yet a king upon the throne of Judah, but he was not a Jew by birth. Herod, the son of Antipater the Idumæan, at this time swayed the sceptre of Israel. Though nominally independent, and an ally of Rome in the Senatorial Roll, he was yet almost as much at this time a vassal of the Emperor, as though he had been merely a tributary prince. He owed his own elevation originally to the favour of Antony, the Roman Triumvir; and after the death of Antony he received his confirmation to his territories from the hands of the Emperor Octavian himself, to whom he had gone to offer personally his congratulations after the decisive victory at Actium. Beyond the question, too, of his entire dependence upon the will of his Zuzerain, Herod found it his interest in every way to lean for support upon the central power at Rome against the ill-will with which he was constantly regarded as an alien by those over whom he reigned.

From the days of Julius Cæsar, when both a land and a poll tax[8] had been imposed upon the Jewish people, they had always been subject to at least the latter, which was from time to time increased in punishment for their repeated acts of revolt. Antony had himself expressly conferred the kingdom upon Herod upon the condition of his keeping up the

[8] Joseph. Antt. xiv. 10. 5, 6, as understood and explained by Wieseler, p. 90. On the taxes of the Jews generally see the same author, p. 83, seqq.

established system of taxation[9]; and Octavian naturally continued Herod's tenure upon the existing understanding. There are evidences, moreover, that the Emperor gradually tightened his hold upon his tributary monarch in consequence of his having more than once exceeded his powers towards the close of his reign[1]. All these circumstances, therefore, must be taken into account in considering the correctness of St. Luke's assertion that a census was held in Judæa at this time in consequence of a decree from the Emperor Augustus, and that it was this decree which, humanly speaking, brought about the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy of Micah.

To all appearance, nothing seemed less likely than that Mary's child should be born out of her own native home; and yet the inworking of events bore down with irresistible force to bring about that which, in all human calculation, might have been regarded as in the last degree improbable.

Since the establishment of the Imperial Government in Rome, there had been an increasing endeavour on the part of the political chiefs to centralize the power in the metropolitan city. The sagacious mind and cautious policy of the present Emperor were devoted to consolidate the central power, and to make its influence felt in the remotest provinces. After the termination of the long civil commotions and foreign wars, the nation was now resting for the first time in unbroken peace from strife and carnage. The gates of the temple of Janus were closed for the third time[2] since the building of the city; and a period of profound tranquillity had now set in, in which all nations of the Empire shared.

It was at this period, then, a time eminently favourable to the

[9] Appian. de B. C. v. 75.

[1] See Joseph. Antt. xvi. 9. 3. Wieseler, p. 85.

[2] The decree for the closing was issued in A.U.C. 743; but owing to some disturbances in Dacia, it was not actually closed until A.U.C. 752.

project, that the Roman Emperor set his great scheme in motion. He issued an edict that all the portions of the vast empire should give in a register of their taxable population with a view to the adjustment of the imperial burdens[3]. Judæa formed no exception to the general order. It was true the country was not yet reduced to the condition of a Roman province. That humiliation was delayed until the deposition of Archelaus, the son and successor of Herod[4] in A.D. 7. But even supposing that Octavian might refrain from issuing a peremptory order to his really subject prince, Herod was far too sagacious a man and too good a courtier himself not to evince a willingness to gratify the autocrat by compliance with even the expression of his wish. In consequence, a general order was issued, whether by Augustus himself or by Herod acting for him it matters not, that the population of the country should be registered.

The Roman and the Jewish mode of registering the census were different in form and practice. By the former every citizen was required to register himself in his "Forum Originis," i. e. the borough town of his birth, with the exception of those who, although subject to the burdens of the Imperial taxation, were yet unable to claim the rights of Roman citizenship. By the *Jewish* mode of procedure every citizen of the country was compelled to resort to the town which was the birthplace of the chief ancestor of his family, where his name was enrolled in the archives of the local register.

It thus fell out that, through the policy of the Romans (which, as far as was practicable, always left their allied and conquered nations to the enjoyment of their own internal usages and manners), without any conscious endeavour on the part of the principal human actors concerned, the ancient prophecy was

[3] Suet. Oct. 28. 101. Tac. Ann. i. 11.
[4] Gresw. Harm. i. 275, 276.

brought to its completion. The royal edict was issued; and Joseph found himself compelled to travel from Nazareth to be entered on the books of the census at Bethlehem, "*because he was of the house and lineage of David*[5]."

(The actual enforcement of the taxation, as we learn from the historian S. Luke, did not take place until after the deposition of Archelaus, A.U.C. 770, when P. Sulpicius Quirinus (the Cyrenius of S. Luke's narrative) was sent from Rome to undertake for the second time the Proconsulate of Syria, to which Palestine politically as well as geographically belonged, for the express purpose of converting it into a province, and the carrying out of the taxing itself.)

In ignorance of the immediate motive (for S. Luke, though he relates the fact, does not think it necessary to account for it), it seems singular that Mary should, in her delicate state of health, have undertaken this long journey, when there was nothing in the nature of the case to create a necessity for it. She was not obliged to appear in person, unless she were an heiress, having landed property in the place[6]; and this, it has been imagined, might have been the case, and have constituted one of the reasons which afterwards apparently disposed them to desire to settle in Bethlehem on their return from Egypt. Even, however, if this supposition be incorrect, it is but natural

[5] Luke ii. 4.

[6] "According to the Roman custom, it was not permissible that Mary should accompany her husband in his journey to the census (Comp. Dion. Halic. Antiq. Rom. iv. 15). The fact of Mary's going to Bethlehem can only be accounted for on the ground of a supposition that she was an heiress, and that she possessed a real estate in Bethlehem. (Comp. Matt. ii. 1.) As in the case of the journey to Jerusalem, so in like manner here in the journey to Bethlehem, the expression ἀναβαίνειν (עָלָה) 'to ascend, i.e. from a lower to a higher place,' implies the accessory idea of a morally-religious height."—Olshausen, 1. pp. 129—130. Oosterzee insists that neither the Roman nor the Jewish law required the presence of women at the census (i. 63). Syrian females, however, above the age of fourteen were liable to taxation, *if possessed of landed property.*

to believe that, under the feeling of the momentous responsibility imposed upon her, both she herself and Joseph may have deemed it safer for her to travel under his watchful care, than that she should be left without the protection of a husband at so critical a period of her life, when Galilee especially was in a disturbed state owing to the unpopularity of the decree. They set out accordingly with the caravan for the south, and directed their steps to the little village of Bethlehem, situated on the slope of one of the uplands of Judæa, about six miles nearly due south of Jerusalem itself.

It was but a small place; and the sudden influx of people, in consequence of the edict, had caused every available portion of the only khan[7] or caravanserai of the place to be occupied by previous comers. Joseph therefore, in his difficulty, took possession of one of the cattle stalls attached to the khan, which offered a shelter not so despicable as compared with the accommodation of the khan itself (the A. V. calls it an *Inn*), as might be supposed by those who derive their ideas exclusively from European habits.

The Eastern khan, or caravanserai[8], was (and still is) a large building in the form of a quadrangle, with apartments opening all round for the accommodation of families, except on one side where stood a large hall for purposes of general meeting. There was an outer and an inner apartment or cell for each party; but, with the exception of security from robbers, the great gates being closed at night, these were but little superior in extent or nature of accommodation, even to the humble stall to which Joseph in the emergency found himself

[7] This was probably the Khan of Chimham, mentioned in Jer. xli. 17. (See p. 107.)

[8] "It is probable that the *κατάλυμα* at Bethlehem was the *upper story* of the caravanserai; and that in that *upper* story the guests were lodged; while the horses and camels were stabled in the *φάτνη* below. This is a very usual arrangement of khans in Palestine and the East."—Wordsworth, Greek Test., on S. Luke ii. 7.

compelled to have recourse. The chief attraction of the khan was the fountain in the centre of the open area, which was common to all travellers and their beasts of burden. Furniture there was none. Each traveller carried his own whithersoever he went; but, in this respect, Eastern wants were, and still are, few. *Furniture*, such as we understand by the word, they needed not in travelling. A rug or two and a thick quilt for a covering at night, a few utensils for cooking, and a vessel to hold water, would constitute the whole of the travelling equipments. Joseph and Mary, therefore, were not exposed altogether to such inconveniences as from our own ways of life we might be apt to imagine. In this humble resting-place, then, "the Son of God" was born.

THE KHAN OF CHIMHAM, OCT. 21, B.C. 5.

It was at the feast of Tabernacles, and it may be assumed on the fourth or mid-day of the festival, answering this year to our twenty-first of October, and (according to the Jewish reckoning) the eighteenth day of the month Tisri. Joseph and Mary had been but a few days in possession of their extemporized dwelling, when the pangs of maternity came upon the Virgin wife. In the quiet secluded abode which necessity, not choice, had led them to accept, Mary gave birth to a male child, who owned no human parentage but her own.

THE DOWNS OF JUDÆA. NIGHT.

It was night; and the shepherds watched their flocks under
the star-lit hea ·d there, little huts formed of the
boughs of tre :r dotted the hillsides, marking
the spots whe e several bands sought
and sleep by ·ed themselves

and took their turns in guarding their helpless flocks against the common danger from the nightly raids of man or wolf.

It was the silence of an Eastern night. To the north-east lay the city of the King, sleeping under the stars upon its holy hills, like a queen resting upon the deep cushions of her deevàn. Far upon the East the Dead Sea caught the shimmer of the stars as they shot their quiet rays down through the transparent atmosphere of Palestine. All was still, except it might be that a low voice chaunted a Psalm of David, as some shepherd-singer mused upon the ancient prophecies of his race, and wondered in his heart how long the Messiah of Israel would yet tarry ere He came to rescue His own from their present thraldom to the foreigner.

High over head to the South was that which, had the shepherd understood the lore of the Chaldean sage, would have kindled a strange glow within his heart. For there in the Southern zodiac two glorious planets were in conjunction; and a Star that no eyes of that generation had ever yet beheld, completed a spectacle so rare that princes had even then left their Eastern home to wend a journey of 1000 miles to seek the meaning of the celestial hieroglyph in an obscure village of the far-distant land of Judæa[9].

But that shepherd's watch became memorable through all time. Never were shepherds blessed like those who now in that still October night kept guard over the flocks committed to their charge. Holy pastors these, watching like men who wait in expectancy for their Lord!

If amongst these devout men there were those who longed for the appearing of the Christ, the vision did not tarry. Suddenly, as they mused and gazed, the Glory of the Lord appeared! That wondrous Shechinah, that in the olden times enwrapped Israel in light, while it shrouded the Egyptian host

[9] See below, pp. 91, &c.

in darkness; that encircled the form of Elijah as he rose amidst its brilliance to heaven; that dwelt in the first temple between the Cherubims over the Mercy-seat of Jehovah, now enfolded earth and heaven in one ineffable blaze of splendour. As that unimaginable glory bathed in its lightning sheen the whole visible face of nature, the Angel's voice was heard:— "Fear not," said the heavenly visitant; (and though he now spoke not his name, is there one who doubts that the voice was that of the same Gabriel who so lately spoke to Zacharias and Mary, now again descending upon his congenial errand of mercy to man?) "Fear not," was ever his gentle salutation. He knew that there could not but be fear amongst the sons of men when one should come amongst them fresh from the presence of Jehovah, bearing the message of the King of Kings! But his errand was one "of mercy not of judgment," and he had "received commandment to bless[1]" in the name of the Lord of Hosts, yea, and "they should be blessed[2]!"

"Fear not; for, behold;
I bring you good tidings of great joy
Which shall be to all (*the*) people[3].
For unto you is born this day,
In the city of David, a Saviour,
Which is Christ the *Lord*[4].
"And this shall be a sign unto you;
Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes,
Lying in a manger[5]."

With angels, then, Bethlehem was still the "City of David," though that royal title had long been transferred by men from the humble little village to the metropolis of Judah. But the

[1] Num. xxiii. 20. [2] Gen. xxvii. 33.

[3] πάντι τῷ λαῷ, to all *the* people; i. e. to all the people of Israel.

[4] Christ the "Lord," i.e. Jehovah. See Wordsworth's note (Greek Test.) on v. 9. The word κύριος stands here three times (vv. 9, 11, 15,) unmistakably for the sacred name. It is, moreover, the term constantly employed by the LXX for the Hebrew יְהוָה.

[5] Luke ii. 10—12.

angel that spoke knew that they to whom he conveyed these glad tidings would understand by the sign he gave which was the city whereof he spake.

Scarce had the angel ceased, while still the awestruck shepherds gazed with eyes that could hardly abide the splendour of the light, the air grew thick with sounds, the heavens became peopled with unearthly forms, and a countless multitude of the Army of Heaven gathered round the angelic speaker's form. Eye could not scan that legionary host, tongue could not tell their tale, nor mind conceive their number. And from all that innumerable choir, one in its infinite array, arose the angelic chaunt :—

> "Glory to God in the highest;
> And on earth peace; goodwill towards men[6]."

As the echoes of that heavenly song floated upon the still evening air, till distant hill and mountain top in seeming gave back their resonance, and ere the silent awe had ceased to thrill through heart and nerve in the tongue-tied shepherd audience, the heavenly gates had closed again upon the beatific vision, and nought save the starry spangle of the sky gleamed over the hills of Ephrath.

BETHLEHEM. THE SAME NIGHT.

Recovered at length from the awe which so mighty a visitation could not fail to strike into their minds, there was but one feeling amongst that shepherd band as they communed one with another upon the heavenly apparition. They would go at once to Bethlehem, and see the thing which the Lord had made known unto them[7]. No doubt, no fear, no hesitation amongst these simple men! They had not *asked* a sign, but it had been given them, and they would go forthwith and

[6] Luke ii. 14. [7] Luke ii. 15.

read it. And so they went with haste, and entered Bethlehem in search of their Infant Lord. Not long had they to seek. In the humble stall lay the Virgin wife, tended by her holy husband; but there on the manger, where was wont to lie the cattle's provender,—there, wrapped in the swathing clothes of new-born infancy, lay the Child upon whom depended alike the hope of Israel and the salvation of the world.

The first fruits of Israel's adoration were thus offered to her infant King; and meet it was that "the Good Shepherd" should be thus welcomed in His birth by those who knew well what it was to feed and care for the sheep, and to be known and followed by them.

The sign verified, and their mission accomplished, the shepherds made known abroad amongst all whom, from a knowledge of their common hopes, they judged to be meet depositaries of the truth, the great and wondrous secret. There were, doubtless, still some seven thousand left [8] in Israel to whom these tidings would indeed be "tidings of great joy." And to these the shepherds' steps would be directed as much under the Divine influence as though the angel had pointed out to whom the night's great revelation should be imparted.

OCTOBER 28, B.C. 5.

The eighth day from the shepherds' heaven-directed adoration was the time for the Circumcision of the Infant. Born of a Jewish mother, "an Israelite of the seed of Abraham [9]," it became Him who was to be "the Glory of His people" to undergo even the human pain and humiliation which belonged to the nature He assumed. And His parents called His name "Jesus," that is, "God the Saviour," the name which was

[8] 1 Kings xix. 18. [9] Rom. xi. 1.

announced to Mary by the angel ere yet He was conceived in His mother's womb[1].

A few days afterwards, when the census was completed in Bethlehem, and the mass of the visitors had therefore quitted the little village, Joseph and Mary, it may be imagined, removed to a lodging where the mother might await in comfort the expiration of the time during which she was compelled by the law of her nation to remain secluded from the world.

THE PURIFICATION.

THE term of forty days required by the Levitical law for the Purification[2] of the Mother and Child had now been completed, and Mary prepared to make the usual offerings at the Temple, and present her Infant to the officiating priest for acceptance in the name of the Lord.

[1] The Circumcision of Christ has always presented difficulties to the mind. That One, who was sinless, should have submitted to an ordinance which more than any other typified the removal of carnal impurity, seems, at first sight, unnecessary and incongruous. But as S. Paul (Gal. iv. 4, 5) expressed it, Jesus was sent forth "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law" (i. e. amongst others). It was His Will, therefore, to be made like in every respect to those whom He came to redeem; and the circumcision of Christ can occasion no greater difficulties than His baptism, when we consider that the life and regeneration of the natural body were represented in Him. Moreover, when we reflect that Christ, though sinless, actually *died* before the glorification of His human body, we shall perceive that being mortal in the flesh (1 Pet. iii. 18), "the temple of His Body transformed itself by degrees only into the ἀφθαρσία, 'incorruption,' through the heavenly πνεῦμα, 'Spirit,' dwelling within." (Cf. Matt. xvii. 1, &c.) *Olshausen*, vol. i. p. 134. See also Heb. ii. 10.

The rite of Circumcision being administered on the eighth day is considered by some as a type of the Resurrection of Christ; for He rose on the eighth day, namely, the first day of the week after the second Sabbath. See Wordsworth, Greek Test., vol. i. p. 201, on Luke xxiv. 1.

[2] Lev. xii. 2—4. Ex. xiii. 2.

There was a symbolical meaning attached to this particular presentation to which it is scarcely too much to believe that the whole inner meaning of the Mosaic ordinance had direct reference. The redemption of the first-born thus offered[3] could always be effected by the payment of five shekels of silver. The ceremony was in fact a memorial of the deliverance of Egypt; and the sum named was required to be paid in token that it was a divinely appointed ransom for the life which God had spared when He slew the first-born of the Egyptian oppressors. The Jewish child before redemption was consecrated to the service of Jehovah. His duty would be to minister, like Samuel, in tabernacle or in temple. But as of course only a certain number were required for this purpose, it was provided that those who pleased should redeem their first-born at the stated price just mentioned (neither more nor less)[4] of five shekels.

In the case of Jesus, the redemption had this peculiar significance, that He was redeemed from serving a material temple, to establish "a greater and more perfect Tabernacle" that should be "not made with hands[5]."

THE TEMPLE, NOV. 30, B.C. 5.

On the forty-first day, therefore, after the birth of the infant Jesus, His parents took Him to the Temple in order that the Purification might be duly accomplished, and the first-born redeemed according to the ordinance of the law.

The offering was made, and the priest received the child into his arms, a precious consignment to the service of Jehovah. Little did he think, as he held the infant Jesus up before the altar of the Lord, of what mighty truth he was then the ex-

[3] Ex. xiii. 13. Num. xviii. 15, 16.
[4] See Ex. xxx. 15.
[5] Heb. ix. 11.

ponent; that in that infant were centred all the hopes not only of his own nation, but of the whole world; that in Him was about to be wrought the ancient promise made to Abraham; that in his seed should "*all the nations* of the world be blessed[6]." For Mary and Joseph had come but in humble garb; and though the offering which Mary made of "two young pigeons" did not prove her to be absolutely poor, yet it served to conceal the truth that she belonged to that princely line from which the Messiah of Israel was expected to derive His descent.

In the cloisters and porches of the Temple there must have been many priests and worshippers who little recked of the deep import of the scene which was then being enacted almost before their eyes. But there were two in Israel for whom it had a deep and holy significance. There was one aged man, Simeon by name, whose fervent prayer it had been for many years that ere his departure he might see "the Lord's Christ." That day the hand of the Lord came upon him, the impulse of the Spirit wrought within his soul, and under the constraint of that burning influence, he entered the Porch of the Gentiles in time to take into his arms the infant Saviour he had so long prayed to see. And so that aged man, about to pass away from the earth, held in his embrace the youthful Prophet of a higher Creed, in whom his prescient gaze told him that he saw the coming Regenerator of the world. And thus, with the future opening before eyes that soon should close upon all the scenes of earth, the aged man lifted up his voice in one last song of praise to Him who had reserved him to behold the hour of Israel's salvation.

And Simeon blessed them, and turning to Mary alone he warned her that her Child would be the Rock against which many in Israel would thereafter stumble and fall[7], while many

[6] Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 18. [7] Isa. viii. 14, 15.

should on the other hand rise by its mighty power; that He would be a sign against whom the evil counsels of men should be directed[8], while His claims would be derided and condemned; and that His doctrines would be the test by which the true state of heart of His countrymen in general would be brought to light. And sadly, with the onward introspect of the prophetic power reaching on to the final scene at Calvary, he warned the young mother that the sword of anguish would pierce through her own soul also, even as we may believe he saw in the spirit the gash of the soldier's spear in the side of the crucified Jesus.

As Simeon spoke, there was standing close by a very aged woman named Anna, the daughter of a devout Jew named Phanuel, one of the remnants of the lost tribe of Asher. Upon her also had the spirit of God rested from time to time, and she was known as a "Prophetess" in Israel. Her age was eighty-four years[9], for nearly sixty-four of which she had been a widow. Seven years only of wedded life had she passed, having married very early even for a Jewish maiden. She was one of those whom S. Paul calls "widows indeed," in whose heart the memory of the one husband she had known and lost had dwelt ever since, to the exclusion of all afterthoughts of marriage. Evening and morning found her in the Temple waiting for the services of God, until it should be His pleasure to call her to Himself. She heard the words and saw the action of Simeon, and at once recognized in the infant he had in his arms the Messiah of her nation. Blessing God for His mercies, she made known, on her departure from the Temple, the glad tidings of redemption to all them whom she knew to be at that time faithful still and expectant in Israel.

[8] Ps. xlii. 10.

[9] This seems to be the true age indicated by the passage in Luke ii. 36, 37.

Anna was, as the narrative states, a Jewess. Who Simeon was, is not explained. The Evangelist simply calls him a "just and devout[1]" man in Jerusalem. The former term applies to his exactitude in the observance of the ritual of the Mosaic Law; the latter to his spiritual condition of holiness. The term "just" may therefore be applied with equal propriety to a Gentile proselyte of righteousness as to a native Jew; and although Simeon, or Simon, is itself a Jewish name, it was far from uncommon for Gentile proselytes to assume Jewish names, or even, as we know, for a Jew on occasions to take a Roman surname, when possessed of Roman citizenship[2]. It is, indeed, unlikely that, if he were a Jew, St. Luke, who so particularizes the parentage and tribe of Anna, should dismiss the identity of so important a person as Simeon is in the opening of the Gospel, with the simple style of "a man in Jerusalem." And the language of Simeon himself, in speaking of "all the nations," and in placing prophetically as well as antileptically the Gentiles before God's "people Israel," a style of speech utterly at variance with the habitual arrogance and exclusiveness of the Jew, seems to characterize a man who looked to the covenant which "was confirmed of God in Christ" to Abraham before his circumcision, rather than to the Law which, as St. Paul says, was not known nor given until 430 years after the promise[3].

If this be the case, then we may regard the welcome of Simeon and Anna as the joint representative homage of Gentile and Jew, offered to the Christ in that house which was truly the house of the Father, in that significant place which was open to both alike. And in the contrast between the aged man and

[1] Luke ii. 25.

[2] For instance, we find mention made of *Simeon* named Niger (Acts xiii. 1), John whose surname was Mark (Acts xii. 25), and Saul, who took for the facility of travelling the Roman name of Paul, to which, as a freeman of a Roman borough, he had a rightful claim.

[3] Gal. iii. 1.

the infant he holds in his arms, we may see the symbol of the expiring law retiring before the advent of the Gospel, to which it had hitherto acted as the precursor and support.

Joseph and Mary returned to their temporary home in Bethlehem for a time; after which they repaired to Nazareth, in order to settle their affairs in their own village. This being done, they fixed upon Bethlehem as the natural place apparently pointed out in God's providence for the nurturing of the Infant Prince.

There they remained until the occurrence of circumstances now to be detailed rendered a total change of purposes impossible to be avoided.

THE VISIT OF THE MAGI.

Jerusalem, February, B.C. 4.

It was a day in the middle of the month of February, B.C. 4. The capital of Judæa was in the midst of a ferment of agitation and excitement. A party of strangers had entered Jerusalem, accompanied by a retinue whose dress and language argued a Chaldæan or Babylonian origin. They were men of princely bearing, and of grave and dignified demeanour. Merchants they were not, for although there were goods of precious value upon the camels' backs, they were not goods for merchandise or barter. Small and curiously carved chests and bales contained the richest produce of their country, the customary offerings to a Sovereign Prince; and, as the cavalcade wound slowly through the narrow streets, but one anxious question was upon the strangers' lips; from all arose the burden of one cry, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"

From mouth to mouth flew the strangers' question; but there was none to answer. The city was agape with wonder and

disquiet; still went up the ever repeated demand, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" and they that asked told, in order to justify their question, how that they had seen the sign that Eastern Sages knew,—they had beheld the star of a Jewish Monarch in its rising [4], and had come from the far-off plains of Mesopotamia to offer him their homage. And then the people knew that the strangers were of the Magian caste from Persia; and that, though they might not truly know the God of Israel, still they were not worshippers of wood and stone;—that with them the science of the heavens had indeed become mixed up with their religion, but that there were high and holy truths amongst the things which they believed and held. There was a knowledge of the true God, overlaid, it might be, with much that was false and unworthy in its accompaniments, but still a knowledge of its kind. Balaam in times of old had been a bad and evil man, but still by his life God had prophesied the future glories of Israel. And his prophecies must still have been preserved amongst his people. Their own Daniel too had swayed a power little inferior to that of the sovereign himself over the very people from amongst whom these strangers came. And the writings of the prophets of the captivity, and the influence of their religion, could scarcely yet have died out among the learned of the Mesopotamian countries. And for the stars,—the better educated Jew was well aware how great an influence the mystic science of Chaldea had exercised even upon his own religion, degenerated as since the times of the captivity it had become [5].

[4] *ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ*, not *ἐν ταῖς ἀνατολαῖς*. See below, pp. 90, 91.

[5] There is an interesting remark in the work of the learned Jesuit, Père du Halde, which throws some light upon the extent to which the Eastern kingdoms were acquainted with the progress of events at a distance so far west.

"A l'oc qu'il eut, l'année deuxième du cycle, où il cru
voir un h gigantesque, il se rappella le souvenir d'une

So, as the words flew from mouth to mouth, there were many that trembled as they watched the grave and solemn strangers, who had come 1000 miles to find, and to worship in their own fashion, Him whose star, discerned from their mystic watch-tower, as it rose in the transparent splendour of an Eastern evening, seemed to call them, as the first-fruits of the Gentile world, to offer homage to the Infant Prince.

The tidings of the strangers' visit were no secret; they soon reached the ears of the reigning Monarch where he lay in the inner chamber of his palace, worn out bodily by exhausting disease, gnawn by the pangs of unavailing remorse, yet even, in the near prospect of a horrible death, planning fresh deeds of cruelty ere he passed away from earth. The tidings of the visit, and the constantly repeated question, entered like harrows of iron into his soul.

He was agitated by fury and by dread; still, whatever he may have felt, it was necessary to proceed with caution. He did not disguise from himself the serious nature of the emergency. It was one demanding the exercise of his utmost prudence and tact. Not only the King, but all Jerusalem with him, was thrown into a state of extraordinary excitement by the visit of the Magians. The people, knowing the temper and disposition of the King, doubtless feared some fresh outbreak of his brutal and suspicious fury. But there arose also the hope that a deliverer might be near, and that the sceptre might be upon the point of returning to the hand of a native prince. Very mingled feelings, therefore, swayed the minds of the people. Between fear and hope the city was violently agitated; while amongst not a few, the devout minority of the people, there rose a

parole qu'on avait entendu dire assez souvent à Confucius, sçavoir que le Saint etait en occident, et il en fut si frappé, qu'il envoya des Ambassadors aux Indes, pour y chercher la véritable doctrine qui y etait enseignée."—Du Halde, vol. i. p. 363, ed. 1736.

confident expectation that the day of the Lord was at hand, and the Messiah about presently to appear.

And some such thought evidently took possession of Herod's mind. He sent accordingly for the chief priests and scribes, all those who were learned in the ancient Scriptures, and laid before them the question where was "the Christ" of their prophetic writings to be born? The answer was unanimous. The sacred roll was unfolded, and the President of the Sanhedrim put his finger upon the prophecy of Micah. "*In Bethlehem of Judæa*," said he, must the Christ be born: "for thus it is written by the Prophet, 'And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule[6] my people Israel.'"

It is worthy of note that, in acting as he did in this matter, Herod never for one moment doubted the truth of the Magians' story respecting the appearance of the star, nor questioned the correctness of their inference, when they connected its appearance with the birth of some mighty prince in Judæa. Indeed, his whole conduct shows that he was himself convinced that such was the case; and that a rightful heir to the throne, a native prince, which he himself was not, had been somewhere lately born in his dominions. And if Herod was convinced with regard to the fact, so neither did the priests nor the scribes hesitate to adopt the same belief. For the whole tendency of the age was to connect astrological portents with the births and deaths of men of rank and eminence in the world. And that the Jewish nation *did* popularly connect the idea of some celestial phenomenon with the birth of their Messiah, is not only to be inferred from a knowledge of the extent to which their own religion had been affected by the influence of the Babylonian captivity, but seems susceptible of

[6] Properly *tend*, as a shepherd does his flock. (Grk. ποιμανεῖ.)

proof from the very part of the sacred history which we are considering.

Herod had, therefore, advanced one important step in the prosecution of his secret and bloody design. He knew now the place of birth of the expected Messiah, whom he doubted not to be indicated by the appearance of the Magian star. It was necessary, however, considering the awakened interest and excitement of the city, that the plan he should adopt for the furtherance of his cruel design should be kept, as far as possible, a secret from the people.

With this view he sent a private invitation to the Magian Princes to visit him at the palace, when he would be able to give them the information respecting the locality of the young King, which they had hitherto sought vainly in the city.

On their arrival, he questioned them closely in the first instance regarding the *exact time* when the star was *first* discovered by them in their own country. His object in so doing was probably a double one. Firstly, he would desire to test their story by a reference to the calculations of his own astrologers; and, secondly, he would thus provide himself with a tolerable clue to the discovery of the child, even should the Magians, in any contingency, prove treacherous to him. But it was necessary to dissemble with them, for the least intimation of any hostile feeling on his part towards the expected Prince might have at once excited their suspicions and baffled his own design. He therefore received them courteously; and, after obtaining from them the information he wanted, directed them to Bethlehem for the object of their search, impressing upon them the necessity of diligent and careful inquiry in so humble a place, and professing himself actuated by a common desire with themselves to tender to the future Monarch of the country the expression of his own homage before his death. He therefore requested of them that, as soon as they should

have succeeded in their object, they would return to himself with all speed, in order that he might put his anxious wish into immediate execution.

It must have been evening when this private interview between Herod and the Magians took place. They set out that very night, according to their Eastern habit of travelling, and would have arrived at Bethlehem about dawn on the morning of the following day.

It will be necessary now, before pursuing the thread of the history, to go back some time, and seek in the character of the visitors, and the circumstances of the age, the ground for that expectation which prompted their journey.

The name of MAGI was properly the title of a high, in fact princely, sacerdotal caste among the Persians. Their number was originally limited to twelve; but, in course of time, the designation became more widely extended; and was applied generally to that class of eastern sages who devoted themselves to the study of astrology and its kindred sciences, real and imaginary. Though Persian in its origin, the name "Magian" hence came to be equally applicable to persons pursuing those studies, whether resident in Chaldæa or Arabia. It is impossible, therefore, to define the country whence these particular Magians really came with greater precision than the very indefinite remark of St. Matthew admits of, that they came "from the East."

It was their study of astrology, the imaginary science which gave birth to scientific astronomy, as alchemy did to chemistry, which brought these eastern philosophers into relation with the Gospel.

The page of nature which they studied was the aspect of the sidereal heavens. In the phenomena exhibited by the various motions and combinations of the heavenly bodies they fancied

they could decipher the prognostications which governed the fate of human affairs. For this purpose the heavens were mapped out, and the stars arranged in those clusters or groups to which we give the name of constellations. Amongst the phenomena to which they, as astrologers, attached the highest mystic meaning were the conjunctions of the two great superior planets, Jupiter and Saturn; with these they associated the chief prognostications respecting the fate of empires. With this object, the twelve zodiacal constellations were respectively assigned to different kingdoms and states over whose fortunes they were assumed to preside. Of these the 12th sign of "Pisces," or "the Fishes," was connected with the kingdom of Judæa. A conjunction of the great planets, therefore, in this zodiacal constellation would be understood by them at once as indicative of some great event or change *about* to take place in the fortunes of that kingdom.

It is now agreed upon by nearly all writers that our Saviour was born *not later* than some time in the year A.U.C. 749, that is, four years before the date commonly assigned as that of His birth. It has been argued in the introductory chapter that He was really born in the middle of October in the previous year, B.C. 5. Now, the Eastern deputation must have reached Jerusalem somewhere about the middle of February in the succeeding year. Less time than this, indeed, would hardly suffice to allow of the forty days' purification of the Virgin, for the return to Nazareth and the settling of their affairs in that village, and the final assumption of their residence in Bethlehem, where, from the tone of the narrative, they seem to have been settled some little time when the Magian visit took place.

In the strict examination which Herod instituted they stated the exact day and hour when they had first seen the star which had determined them upon visiting Jerusalem in search of the King whose birth they considered to have been heralded by its appearance. For it was upon the result of the diligent

and accurate inquiry which he instituted that Herod formed his resolution of putting to death all the children in Bethlehem whose age should be of *two years and under*. The term "two years old," however, may be construed with some little latitude. The original expression "of two years" denotes any child of from thirteen to twenty-four months, a circumstance which has given rise to various opinions respecting the time of the Magians' departure from their own land, and the period over which their journey extended. It is impossible, however, to arrive at any definite conclusion from indefinite premisses. It will therefore be advisable to take the words in their literal sense, and to inquire into the grounds, if any, which might have existed to determine the Magians in fixing the period of their journey so as to arrive at Jerusalem about the time when their visit is recorded to have actually taken place. We must, therefore, reckon backwards in order to arrive at the time at which they stated they observed the first appearance of the star. Their visit to Herod was, as we have seen, about the middle of February; and from the account which the King received from them he determined upon putting to death every child of the age of two years old and under. It is clear, therefore, that, though the expected King of the Jews might have been born at any time *within* that period, he could not, upon the Magian supposition, have been born *outside* its limit. And it is probable that Herod would allow some little margin over and above the actual time, in order to cover all contingencies. The star must, therefore, have appeared, if star there was, sometime after the 15th of February, A.U.C. 749.

Here let the Magians tell their own story. "We have seen," said they, "His star in its *rising*, and are come to worship Him" accordingly. The "rising" they allude to is the heliacal rising, when a star first becomes visible after emerging from the solar rays. That they meant a STAR, and no other heavenly body, is plain, we must consider, from the word employed. For

although it *may* possibly be used in the sense even of a cluster, or a conjunction, it is but reasonable to suppose that, as astronomers, they knew of what they were speaking, and that they used the word in its obvious and natural sense. The term rendered in A. V., "the East," is also certainly the "rising;" for that is its natural import in the singular number; and in the plural number, which *does* signify the East, it is used in the very same chapter. The two words, therefore, mutually support each other, when taken in their natural sense; whereas, according to most of the explanations sought to be engrafted upon them, each is separated from the other, and applied in a sense which is, to say the least, extremely unusual. I conclude, therefore, that the Magians did see, and meant to say they saw, a *star*, in no wise distinguishable in character from one of the true cosmical bodies, in its first heliacal rising.

It remains to be seen what grounds exist in astronomical history for believing that a new star might have appeared, or did really appear about this time; and what reasons the Magians may have had for connecting it with the supposed birth of a Judæan Prince.

In the year A.D. 1603 there occurred a remarkable conjunction of the planets already spoken of. It took place on the 17th of December. In the spring of the following year, 1604, the planet Mars was added to the group; and in the autumn of that year a *perfectly new star* appeared, which continued with some variations of apparent size and splendour until the month of March, 1606, when it finally disappeared altogether. The rare and interesting phenomenon of this conjunction led the celebrated German astronomer Kepler to a very remarkable conclusion. He was aware that, in all ancient astrological systems, these conjunctions held a very important place; and he accordingly entered upon a series of calculations with the view of ascertaining whether any such conjunction had occurred

at or about the time of our Saviour's birth. The result of these calculations established the fact that in the year B.C. 7 (i.e. two years before the birth of Christ) there were *three* conjunctions of Jupiter and Saturn, which (according to the correction of Pritchard) occurred on the dates May 29, September 29, and December 5. In the spring of the following year, B.C. 6, the planet Mars also joined the group, presenting to the eye of the observer, in the pure and transparent atmosphere of Persia, a spectacle of rare and surpassing beauty.

The calculated proximity of the two superior planets was in this case so remarkable, that Kepler was led to suggest the theory that this conjunction was the phenomenon intended by the "star"; he even considered that to a person of moderate sight the two planets might appear optically as blended into one, and might therefore be optically so described. But it has been shown that this could never have been the case, as at no period of the time did the planets approach each other within twice the distance of the moon's apparent diameter. Moreover, the peculiar transparency of the Persian atmosphere would enable them to be readily separated by the naked eye, even had they been in much greater proximity to each other than they really were.

It was not, then, the *conjunction* which the Magians meant when they spoke of the "star;" they could not have been deceived upon the point themselves, nor would they have employed the term in speaking to others. We are driven, therefore, to the conclusion that it was a cosmical body, a real star, which they saw, and which they recognized according to their creed as that of a "King of the Jews."

Now the conjunction of which we have spoken occurred in the constellation "Pisces," which has already been pointed out as the zodiacal sign for Judæa. Hence the phenomenon would at once set the Magian astronomers on the alert, in the belief

that some event of magnitude was portended at no great distance of time to the kingdom of Judæa. Had they any idea, therefore, or grounds for imagining, that in about three years' time from the date of the first of the four phenomena, some great personage would appear in that part of the world?

On this point we may well hear the words of the learned Jew Abarbanel. Writing towards the close of the fifteenth century, just after another conjunction of the same planets in 1463, he observes that in all probability the birth of the Messiah was then not far distant, for that the birth of Moses had been preceded by a similar occurrence by just three years; and that there was a general opinion that the celestial phenomena attending the appearance of their great lawgiver would be paralleled by similar prognostications in the case of the expected Messiah. If this, then, was the expectation of the Magians also, we may see at once the explanation of the chief difficulty, viz., why they should have waited so long before setting out for Judæa; for their journey would have occupied but from six weeks to six months, according to the part of the East from which we suppose them to have set out.

We have therefore at present arrived at these facts, viz.:—

(1.) That conjunctions of the planet were, in an astrological point of view, events of great importance.

(2.) That three such conjunctions did actually occur three years before the birth of Christ.

(3.) That the Zodiacal sign of Pisces in which they appeared was the Judaic sign.

(4.) That there is evidence that a similar conjunction occurred in B.C. 1731, which preceded by three years the birth of Moses, and was astrologically connected with that event.

(5.) That a Jewish writer (*ignorant*, it should be observed, *of the conjunctions of* 7. B.C.) did assume that that of A.D.

1463 indicated the near approach of the Messiah's birth, according to the tradition which assumed a parallel between Moses and Christ.

If, then, the Magians knew any thing of the phenomenon preceding the birth of Moses, we can readily understand why they should not have thought it necessary to hurry their journey. They would naturally expect that the personage they believed about to be born would not appear for a similar space of time after the spring of A.U.C. 746 (i.e. B.C. 7). Now we must recollect that there were great numbers of Jews and Israelites, partly remnants of the captivity and dispersion, partly, perhaps, attracted by ties of family connexion, or commercial considerations, still living in the East. Their religious views and traditions could not fail to be extensively understood; and from the times of Daniel and the prophets of the captivity there must have been a very general acquaintance in Chaldea and Persia and the East generally, with the history and expectations of the Jewish people. That the Magian philosophers, therefore, should fully expect some great personage shortly to appear in Judæa seems a conclusion at which they could hardly help arriving. Still it does not necessarily follow that they should have looked for a *King*, especially when, if they knew any thing of the country to which they were about to direct their steps, they must have known that there was then a King upon the throne, with sons to continue the succession in his line; for they could not have thought of the birth of another son to Herod.

It is here that the appearance of the star comes in to confirm and assure the minds of the Eastern sages. The great personage whom the phenomenon of the conjunction had led them to expect, the star determines to have been a *King*. The combination of astrological data are now precise. It is a "*King of the Jews*" who is to be born, and a King whose reign

is to be accompanied and signalized by very remarkable circumstances. The Magians had no longer any doubt. The Person indicated was the King of Prophecy. They would go and seek Him, and offer the customary tokens of Eastern homage.

And now for the star itself. Did any such phenomenon appear at all? If so, was it a comet, a meteor, or any peculiar body not cosmical but atmospheric, created specially for the immediate purpose of leading these Magians to Christ?

Those who hold this opinion have been probably influenced by two suppositions: first, that the appearance was specially and miraculously produced for the particular object; secondly, that it had a proper motion of its own as a guide to the visitors from their own country to Bethlehem.

With regard to the first of these suppositions, we may observe that certainly St. Matthew gives no intimation whatever of any thing miraculous about the appearance of the star. He treats it as an ordinary star, and as nothing else. Had it been a comet or a meteor he would certainly have said so; for both kinds of bodies were well known to the ancients. A comet would not have fulfilled the supposed conditions of motion and of guidance; and a meteor lasting any such length of time would surely have attracted sufficient general attention for the Evangelist to have taken some notice of the fact.

In the second case, we certainly find no grounds for imagining that the Magians followed the guidance of the star. They left their own land, and journeyed to the East in consequence of the calculations they had formed as to the place and time of birth of the King. The star, however it may have been to them, which it unquestionably was, the *sign* of a King, gave *of itself* no indication of his place or time of birth. That depended, as we have seen, upon the significance of the planetary phenomena. The only other circumstance which can give

colour to the notion is the statement of St. Matthew that it "came and stood over where the young child was." This argument will be presently disposed of.

I assume, then, that, already prepared for the birth of some great personage in Judæa, the appearance of the star converted their belief into certainty, and exalted their views into the expectation of the King. This we may be sure, from the very language of the narration, was to the Magians the true office of the star. Had they never beheld it again after quitting their own country, they would none the less have gone to Jerusalem on their quest. That they did go to *Jerusalem*, and not to *Bethlehem* of themselves, is positive proof that the star was not their guide to the whereabouts of the Christ.

What, then, was the star? for that it was not one of the ordinary visible tenants of the heavens is proved by the fact of their calling it "*His Star*," evidently alluding to one either not usually visible, or to one seemingly newly called into existence. Under either view it is impossible to doubt that they believed it to be the one predicted by their own prophet Balaam. Here then we must call in the aid of astronomical records.

We find, then, in the writings of astronomers, notices of temporary stars, as they have been called, which, according to Sir John Herschel, have appeared from time to time in different parts of the heavens, *blazing forth with extraordinary* lustre; and after remaining awhile apparently immovable, have died away, and left no trace. The appearance of the star of A. D. 1572 was so sudden, that Tycho Brahè, a celebrated Danish astronomer, returning one evening (the 11th of November) from his laboratory to his dwelling-house, was surprised to find a group of country people gazing at a star which he was sure did not exist half an hour before. This was the star in question. It was then as bright as Sirius, and con-

tinued to increase till it surpassed Jupiter when brightest, and was visible at mid-day [7]. It began to diminish in December of the same year, and in March, 1574, had entirely disappeared [8]." Now it must be observed that, in the years 945 and 1264 A.D., brilliant stars of this description are recorded to have appeared in the very same region of the heavens as the one just mentioned; and taking into account some imperfections in the records preserved, modern astronomers have come to the conclusion that these three are but appearances of one and the same star, recurring probably at periods of about 312 years. If now we calculate backwards on this supposition, we shall find that this particular star would have appeared within a very few years of Christ's birth at most; and allowing for disturbing causes such as seem to be at work in it, especially as the observations respecting it are but very few and inexact, it *might* have appeared at the very time when the Magians are said to have observed the Star of the King of the Jews.

Now it so happens that we are not left altogether without hints from history upon this point. Pingrè in his "Cométographie [9]" records the appearance of two supposed comets in

[7] Chytræus, in his quaint tract *De Stella Nova et Inusitata*, speaks of a new star which remained visible in the same spot in the heavens from the 8th of November, 1572, to the beginning of the year 1573, near the constellation Cassiopeia.

[8] Outlines of Astr., pp. 602-3. (10th Ed.)

[9] "En Chine, sous l'empire de *Gay-ti*, deuxième année Kien-ping, à la première et deuxième lune (vers l'Equinoxe du Printemps), il parut une comète dans la constellation *Nieou* (tête du Capricorne): on la vit durant soixante-dix jours. M. Struyck croit que ce pourroit être la comète de 1652." (Pingrè, vol. i. p. 281.)

"L'an 4 (ou plus probablement l'an 3) avant l'ère Chrétienne, à la troisième lune (en Avril ou Mai), il parut une comète aux étoiles *Ho-kou* (α de l'Aigle et étoiles voisines), au nord de la constellation Kien-Nieou (partie du Capricorne). Cette comète, si elle a paru en l'an 4, ne diffère probablement pas de la précédente." (Ibid. p. 281.) He quotes also

the annals of the Chinese, the one in the spring of the fifth year B.C., the other in that of the fourth. He, however, gives it as his opinion that these two are really but one and the same celestial body, and Wieseler (p. 612) thinks that in fact it was a star and not a comet. Is it possible, then, that this comet or star was identical with the stars of 1572, 1264, and 945? and also with that of which we are now in search? It will be observed that, if this stellar body be assumed as identical with the Magian star, there will be found to be an interval of only twelve or thirteen months from the time of its first appearance to that at the period of the visit of the Magi. Hence it might appear that the period of "two years and under" assigned by Herod after his inquiry for the limit of age of the children he designed to massacre is inconsistent with this supposition. But it must be observed that the Magians did not say that *the star appeared two years before*; it was in consequence only of their reply to his question, *whatever that reply may have been*, that Herod decided upon fixing that limit. Now the expression in the original (ἀπὸ διετοῦς) may denote (as I have before observed, p. 90), any time whatever over and above one complete year. For a child even of thirteen months was, in Jewish phraseology, "a child of two years." It is clear, therefore, that no exact inference can be drawn from this expression as to the precise date of the star's appearance. Herod was not likely to be very particular as to the number of children whom his edict might destroy; and he would naturally fix an outside limit, in order that he might make sure of the one infant of

Mailla, iii. 214. Mailla's dates are 5 and 4 B.C. For the reconciliation of these with those of Pingrè, see Wieseler, pp. 61, &c.

According to Dasypodius (*de Cometis*, 1578), the appearance of a comet in conjunction with the planet Saturn in the sign of Capricornus, was astrologically portentous of wars, calamities, and deaths of princes, with contempt of religion, and other national disasters. See also Antonius Gattus, *Tractatus de Cometis*, 1587, and Harvey, *Astrol. Disc.*, 1583.

whom he was in search. And the fact that his order extended *downwards* to the infant even of yesterday's birth proves that he himself regarded the age of the child as under, rather than as closely approaching, the certified date of the star's appearance. It was his object simply to fix such a limit of age as should be *certain to include* the child he sought to kill. If in so doing a few children more or less chanced to perish, it was not a matter which would enter into the calculations of his brutal, wary mind. It is only worthy of observation that, in the fact that all children whatever *under* the age of the "two years" were to be slaughtered, we have a very strong confirmatory argument that Jesus could not have been many months old (it is here assumed that He was four) when the Magians visited Jerusalem. And this conclusion accords entirely with the view here taken of the year and month of His birth.

So far I have attempted to corroborate St. Matthew's account of this most interesting portion of the sacred narrative by evidences and proofs drawn from wholly independent sources. Let it not be inferred, however, herefrom that it is indispensable so to supplement or establish the truth of the Evangelist's statement. That would still stand upon its own basis, challenging the opponents of Christianity to bring forward one single valid argument in refutation of its credit. If St. Matthew states distinctly that the Magi were led by the appearance of a star to visit Jerusalem in quest of the newly-born King of the Jews, he takes his stand upon that ground of credibility which is claimed by all historians, against whose *bonâ fides* or sources of information no sufficient objection can be laid. The mere absence of contemporary corroborative statements is no *positive* argument against the credibility of the writer. It merely leaves his own assertion to be taken for what it is worth; and its value as an independent unsupported assertion will always depend upon the degree of credibility attaching to

his writings in the main, after that they have been tested by the ordinary rules of critical judgment. Still it is always highly desirable to be able to adduce, as in the present case, from observations or circumstances entirely unconnected with the writer or his means of knowledge, collateral evidence in corroboration of his independent statements. St. Matthew says the Magi came to look for a King of the Jews in consequence of the appearance of a star, which, in accordance both with their own system of scientific exposition, and (as we may well believe) from their interpretation of ancient prophecy, they concluded to be cosmically connected with His birth. Upon the face of the narrative there is not only nothing to suggest a doubt of its credibility, but a striking harmony with the belief and expectation of the times. "In all ages," says Dr. Lardner, "and among all people, a tendency has prevailed to connect terrestrial events with celestial phenomena. Popular opinion in such cases seeks no reason for its foundation. No attempt to establish any such relation as that of cause and effect is thought of. The appearance presented in the heavens, whatever it be, is simply regarded as the harbinger, precursor, or presage of the terrestrial events which are supposed to accompany or to succeed it. When the celestial phenomena thus regarded are from their nature periodical and recurring, as in the case of the succession of lunar phases, some attempt is made to generalize the imputed effects, and to reduce them to rules. In the case, however, of celestial appearances, which are occasional and extraordinary, and which have no discovered periodicity, no such general rule can be established. In such cases mankind is, however, not less prompt and confident in ascribing to their appearance any extraordinary events whatever which may have taken place simultaneously with or immediately after them[1]." And, as we have now seen, the

[1] Museum of Science, ii. 65.

testimony of independent records, which deals simply with observed facts, goes far to support the credibility, if not actually to establish the truth, of the sacred narrative. I conclude, therefore, that the Magian sages were led by the appearance of a star to seek and actually to find the "King of the Jews."

It may, however, seem strange to some persons that God should have made a groundless superstition the means of leading men to truth. If the dealings of Omniscience should seem in this respect inconsistent with the revealed character of the Almighty, the following observations will probably go far to meet the difficulty :—

"It would have been incomprehensible," says Ebrard, "if God had occasioned the rise of the Chaldean astrology through the appearance of this star. But the Chaldean astrology was in existence before. And, *in addition to this*, there was also a well-known prediction of the coming of a celebrated *King of the Jews*. Now if the over-ruling providence of God did so order events that, according to the previous premisses of the Chaldean astrology, the conjunction and the appearance of the star led the Magi to seek at the right moment the new-born King of the Jews, this would be in perfect analogy to the standing law of Divine revelation, that God mercifully stoops to the weakness of men that He may lead them onward step by step. Thus the first revelations of a coming Messiah were linked on to the political desires of Israel, and it was not till a later period that they were more clearly explained; whilst the full explanation was reserved for Christ Himself. Thus Paul again took as his starting-point the altar and worship of the unknown God[2]."

Neander, in his life of Christ, has also some very apposite and excellent remarks upon this question. "The Magi," he says, "studied astrology, and in this study found a sign of

[2] Gospel History, p. 184.

Christ. If it offends us to find that God has used the errors of man to lead him to a knowledge of the great truths of salvation, as if thereby He had lent Himself to sustain the false, then we must break in pieces the chain of human events, in which the true and the false, the good and the evil, are so inseparably linked, that the latter often serves for the point of transition to the former. Especially do we see this in the history of the spread of Christianity, where superstition often paves the way for faith. God condescends to the platforms of men in training them for the belief in the Redeemer, and meets the aspirations of the truth-seeking soul even in its error. In the case of the wise men, a real truth, perhaps, lay at the bottom of the error; the truth, namely, that the greatest of all events, which was to produce the greatest revolution in humanity, is actually connected with the epochs of the material universe, although the links of the chain may be hidden from our view[3]."

It was night, as has been said, when the Magians set out for Bethlehem in search for the Christ. It is allowable to believe that their minds must have been strangely affected by what they had seen and heard. They, in their distant land, had read in the heavens, as they believed, the sign of the newly-born King of the Jews, to whom the traditions and prophecies of the past all pointed, as one of more than common royalty. And where should they have sought the Prince but in the capital of His own dominions? and from whom should they have learned His abode, but from the chiefs of His own people? Yet in Jerusalem He was not; and among the men of rank and learning in the city there were none who knew Him; but their question had strangely agitated all who heard it. And now they were on their road to a little village amongst

[3] P. 29, Bohn's edition.

the hills of Judah, with no other guide than their own steadfast purpose and unshaken faith to help them in their search. Some such perplexing thoughts could hardly have failed to disquiet their minds, as they slowly travelled, in the Eastern fashion, through the quiet night. And so in silent musing they journeyed on rising the long ascent, till, as they crowned the height of the southern hill-top, suddenly a jubilant cry of unspeakable joy burst forth and broke the stillness of that early night of spring, for there, in the South-Eastern sky, looking down from heaven like a beacon to point the way before them,—there over the roofs of Bethlehem stood the star, whose first rising in the heavens had caused them to undertake their long and anxious journey. Not to Jerusalem had its rays led them. They had gone there seeking "the living among the dead," and found that He was not there. But now, when with averted steps they had quitted that city of "whitened sepulchres" the store-house of dead works, again the herald star was before them, keeping watch over the little hamlet wherein the Prince of Peace lay sleeping.

Deep, indeed, and solemn must have been the joy which lighted up the hearts of the pious travellers, deep in proportion to the disappointment they had so lately experienced, solemn in the grateful sense they must have felt of the over-ruling and imminent presence of the God who made the heavens. To Bethlehem, then, they went; and no long delay would they experience in that little place in finding where He dwelt, whose birth had been ushered in by angels with the divine message which the shepherds had but a few weeks before made known to those in the village who "looked for redemption in Israel."

The star, let it be observed, did not *lead* the Magians either to Jerusalem or to Bethlehem. That, as has been already shown, was not its office in their system of belief. The *planets* had told them to go to Jerusalem as the capital of Judæa, the

star declared that it was a King who had been born. Nor, indeed, could the narrative itself give ground for such a supposition, any more than the position of the star in the heavens could have afforded any indication of the course. On the journey from the East to Jerusalem, the star, if they saw it at all, would have been *not before* them, but on *their left*, so that it could in no way have fulfilled the conditions of a *guide*. It was not until the inquiries in Jerusalem proved fruitless, and they turned their steps to Bethlehem, that the star which stood in the South-East appeared *before* the travellers; for their previous journey had been from East to West; but the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem runs, with but one or two windings, to the South. If, however, the supposed comets of the Chinese annals of B.C. 4 and B.C. 5 were appearances of one and the same body, as Pingrè supposes; and if that body were really, as seems most likely, a temporary star, and the one we are in search of—then the Magians may really have beheld it now for the first time since they lost sight of it in the previous year in the East. Now it is necessary not to be misled by the expression that the star "*went before* them till it came, and stood over where the young child was." It "*led them on*," we should rather read the passage, just as the sight of the house itself, had they known it, would have led them on. And by saying that "it came and stood over where the child was," the Evangelist surely does not mean to assign any other motion to the star than that apparent one which all the heavenly bodies have to a person walking in their direction. It is an optical illusion; and, as St. Matthew is careful to describe the *effect* which the scene had upon the minds of the Magians, he is not concerned with matters of science in his description. He is speaking of an optical effect, and he describes it as it would optically appear. High up in the heavens, as he states it to have appeared, the star would have seemed to stand over the

place (not the house) where Jesus was; a body which was cosmical, not situate in the earth's atmosphere, could not have indicated one house among many.

On entering the house where Mary now had her dwelling, the Magian Princes opened the chests and bales which contained offerings of their country's produce to the infant King of Judah[4]. Gold and frankincense and myrrh are specified amongst the offerings, though in all probability they formed but a small proportion of the presents which it was then (as it is even now) customary in the East for inferiors to offer to their superior. These products of the soil were pretty widely diffused throughout the country extending from Arabia to Mesopotamia, and no doubt were the natural offerings to make. Later times have, however, endeavoured to fasten upon them a mystic significance, which it is very improbable the Magians themselves attached to them. For there is no evidence whatever that they regarded Jesus as other than a powerful temporal monarch; nor in their own conception of the Zoziosh, or Redeemer, did they contemplate any vicarious oblation of His life as a ransom for sins.

The act of homage completed, they would seek rest and repose at the same Khan of Chimham, where Joseph on his arrival had first unsuccessfully sought a lodging. They had no doubt intended returning to Herod, with the tidings that their mission had been satisfactorily accomplished and that the object of their search had been discovered. But this was not to be. In their sleep the power of the Lord overshadowed them, and they were commanded by a voice which they could not disobey, not to return to Herod, but to depart by another

[4] The providence of God may be discerned in this timely offering of the Magi, when it is considered how valuable their presents would be in the hasty journey to Egypt, for which, wholly unexpected as it was, Joseph and Mary could have made no preparation.

route, which avoided Jerusalem, into their own country. They obeyed at once, and doubtless learned from the vision that their visit had a deeper and a more glorious meaning than they themselves had at the time contemplated. Such was the first homage of the Gentile world to Emmanuel.

MASSACRE OF BETHLEHEM AND RETURN OF JOSEPH TO NAZARETH.

THE fury of Herod, on finding himself baffled by the Magians, passed all bounds. His bodily sufferings exasperated the fury of his mind. If he could not live to reign himself, he was resolved at least that no pretender should live to dispute the throne with the heir of his dynasty.

Those who find in the approaching end of Herod an argument against the period of the massacre of Bethlehem forget that, with tyrants like him, the near prospect of death does but increase and exasperate the jealousy and vindictiveness of nature. It was but five days before he died that Herod had his own son Antipater put to death for a fruitless endeavour to escape from the imprisonment to which his father had consigned him. And if the story which Josephus tells of the contemplated massacre of the disaffected Pharasaic faction be in itself untrue, it at least shows the general belief in the bloodthirsty vindictiveness of the dying despot.

Orders were accordingly issued in the King's name for the instant massacre of all children in Bethlehem, from the age of two years and under. The limit of age was fixed by Herod in accordance with the account given to him by the Magians of the time of the star's appearance. Acting upon the astrological view of the question, he nevertheless could not be sure of the

meaning of the star. It might have denoted the conception, it might have announced the birth. At all events, the limit of "two years" (i. e. thirteen months) would comprise the date of the child's birth; and supposing Him to be still in Bethlehem, an edict for the destruction of all male children from the age of two years and under would, under given conditions, ensure the removal of this unwelcome pretender to the throne.

But the conditions were not all to be ensured. Before the order for the murder had been issued, the Infant Jesus and His parents were far upon their road to Egypt.

For scarcely had the Persian sages departed from the little home in Bethlehem, when the same angel, who had formerly warned Joseph not to repudiate his affianced wife, now again appeared to him in his dream, and laid upon him the command of God, that he should take the Infant and His mother, and flee into Egypt. There he must abide in safety until he, the Angel, should bring him word to return. "For," said the Angel, "Herod is upon the point of seeking the young child to destroy Him."

Forthwith Joseph arose; and prepared for an instant removal. Their preparations were, as for Easterns, few; and no long time elapsed after the Angelic warning, ere Joseph and Mary and the Infant Jesus were on their way to Egypt.

Bethlehem was itself, probably, the first station out of Jerusalem on the road to the ancient domain assigned by the Pharaonic King to the family of Jacob. The very Caravanserai where Joseph sought at first a dwelling was in all likelihood the Khan of Chimham[5], where travellers into Egypt first rested on their departure from Jerusalem. And, to an Israelite, the part of Egypt which he would first enter after quitting his own country would be congenial ground. From Bethlehem to Rhinocolura (El Arish), on the borders of Egypt,

[5] Jer. xli. 17, and above, p. 72.

was but a journey of three or four days; and, once over the borders, there were many pious Egyptian families, nay even those of Jewish descent, amongst whom they might find welcome and shelter, and an unanimity of faith.

There the holy family remained until the death of their persecutor, "that the prophecy might be fulfilled" (so remarks St. Matthew) "'Out of Egypt have I called my son.'"

Early as the holy family had quitted their dwelling, the event showed that they had left not one moment too soon. The Angel's message had anticipated the secret orders of Herod by but a few hours. In anxious expectation, with bloody thoughts filling his mind, Herod had sat waiting the return of the Magians. Hour after hour passed, as his mind gradually came to misgive him; and when at length the time for the strangers' return came to be now long overpast, and no sign nor tidings came from Bethlehem, the tyrant's growing suspicions became certainty; and, "in his rage and fury," he gave orders for the instant destruction of every infant in the little village and its immediate environs, which should come under the designation of a "child of two years old."

The sanguinary order was speedily and but too faithfully obeyed. Ere many hours were past, not a child of the proscribed age was left alive in the little village. But all this butchery was of no avail. The wolves were disappointed of their prey. The fold was indeed warm with recent habitation, but the lamb had escaped. By the time the murderers reached Bethlehem, there were twenty miles at least between the Infant Jesus and His pursuers. A cruel and a useless massacre had been perpetrated, and Herod's line was none the more firmly seated upon the throne.

On the 5th of April, less than a fortnight after the events just detailed, Herod the Great died in great agonies of body, still keeping to the last his fierce and vindictive spirit. The news

was communicated to Joseph in Egypt by the same angel who had hitherto been the minister of God's pleasure to him.

With his usual obedience, Joseph, on arising from sleep, "took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel."

It would appear that Joseph's intention was at this time to settle in Bethlehem, where it is not improbable that Mary, if not he himself, had some small landed property[6]. On his road, however, he heard that Archelaus had succeeded to the throne of Judah, fit son of such a father[7]. While pondering in his mind how it would behove him to act in the emergency in which he was placed, a fresh warning from the Almighty in his dreams decided him upon retiring into Galilee again, where a King of the *Jews* would not be an object of so much suspicion as in his own native country of Judæa. There he took up his abode permanently during the remainder of his life in the village where he had married the mother of the Infant Jesus. That village, as we know, was Nazareth. The comment of St. Matthew upon this circumstance is "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene[8].'" The true meaning of this statement of St. Matthew is not obvious. It is well known that no prophecy exists that runs in these words. But at the same time it is observable that the Evangelist does not here allude to any particular passage, but to the statements of *the Prophets* in general. "The words are no where found in the Old Testament

[6] This circumstance, if true, would in some measure account for Mary's journey to Bethlehem at the census. (See above, p. 71, and the note there.)

[7] "Archelaus was, no doubt, at the time of which St. Matthew speaks, styled *King*, the decis[illegible]s on Herod's will not being yet received at Jerusalem; and [illegible]as probably continued in the popular language, in prefe[illegible]narch or Tetrarch, with which titles the Jews were n[illegible]iliarized."—Forshall, on Matt. ii. 22.

[8] Matt. ii. 23.

Scriptures, but the sense of them in every place in which the humiliation and rejection of Messiah are foretold[9]." Whatever, therefore, may be the meaning of the words, it must be sought in the etymology of the word Nazarene. Now the Hebrew term of Nazareth is properly Netzer, signifying a "branch" or a "shrub." And Nazareth was peculiarly, from its situation and surrounding scenery, the "town of shrubs or low trees." And like the little village of Zoar, which received its name from its comparative insignificance, so the post-captivity town of Nazareth may have received its appellation in allusion to its humble condition, as compared with the stately trees which symbolized the greater cities of Palestine. Hence the general idea which the Evangelist puts forward in the title of Nazarene is that of *lowliness*, and he would therefore have generally in view all those passages of the old Prophets in which this view of the Messiah's character is prominently represented[1]."

If this view of the derivation of the word itself be rightly grounded, then it is scarcely possible to resist the belief that the standpoint of the Evangelist's reference is the prophecy of Isaiah, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots[2]."

In that village, then, the child Jesus grew up, gaining daily mightier power in spiritual knowledge and wisdom, for the grace of God was with Him.

[9] Forshall, on Matt. ii. 23.

[1] Such would be especially Psalms xxii. and lxix. Isa. liii. 2. Ezek. xvii. 22—24. Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12.

[2] Isa. xi. 1.

JESUS IN HIS TWELFTH YEAR.

"A Son of the Law[3]."

A PERIOD now occurs of nearly twelve years, regarding which the Evangelist is wholly silent.

Jesus was now in His twelfth year. This was the age at which a Jewish youth became entitled to the full privileges of his national birth, and was admitted for the first time to a participation in the Great Festival of the Passover. He therefore accompanied Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem for this purpose on the occasion of its celebration in the Nisan of the year 8 A.D.

St. Luke states that His parents went up every year to the feast. That Joseph should do so was a matter of duty, but of course, with Mary, as a female, it was optional. It is not clear why she invariably went, unless she believed that some principle of duty as a companion to her husband, such as might have entered into her motives in her journey to Bethlehem, were involved in her going. We do not hear of Jesus accompanying His parents before: if fear of Archelaus had hitherto caused them to leave Him behind in Nazareth, that fear was now removed, for Archelaus had now been deposed and banished from his kingdom[4].

On the conclusion of the Paschal week, Joseph and Mary set out to return to Nazareth.

It was not until the evening of the first day of their journey that they discovered that Jesus was not in the caravan by which they travelled. True, they had not observed Him throughout the day, but the caravan was a very large one on that occasion, as there were so many who had gone up to the feast,

[3] On the term "Son of the Law," see Oosterzee, i. 89.

[4] See p. 70.

and they naturally surmised that their Son had attached Himself to some one or other of their neighbours' companies with whom He was well acquainted.

It was not, therefore, until the evening halt, when they missed Him from the family tent on retiring for the night, that they instituted inquiries about Him; and uneasiness grew into alarm, when they found that He had not been seen by, or amongst, any of their kinsfolk or acquaintance. It was too late then to retrace their steps, so they were obliged to await the early dawn before they could turn on their backward route to seek Him, where they had left Him, in Jerusalem.

As the return journey occupied the same time as their journey outwards, they did not reach the city until the evening of the second day. Another night of anxiety must, therefore, be passed before they could set their fears at rest. On the third day they set out upon their anxious search. Whether that search was long or not, we are not told. It is most natural to suppose that they would first inquire at the houses of the few friends they had in the city, and not hearing any tidings of Him there, their knowledge of His character and habits would lead them at once instinctively to the Temple. For Jesus was now in the position of a Catechumen of the Law, and was in fact (as we may say) of age so far as the religious privileges of a Jew were concerned; He was, in their own idiom, now "a Son of the Law."

In the Temple they had not long to seek. The Schools of the Doctors were held in Chambers, or in the Porches in the Court of the Women; and it was thither they directed their steps. It was probably their knowledge of the way in which the leisure time of Jesus was passed in His own little town which actuated them in seeking Him here. They knew how He availed Himself of the scanty means of learning which their own little northern synagogue afforded; and they rightly

judged that He would seize the precious opportunity, which His age and visit now afforded Him, of gaining deeper and more extended learning in the writings of the Law and of the Prophets than could be procured at home.

There then they found Him; sitting as a student, probably with others, upon the floor in the midst of the doctors, listening to their lectures, answering their catechetical questions, and asking for further information, as was usually permitted, on points which demanded fuller and clearer light than the doctors themselves were perhaps in the habit of throwing upon the meaning of the Prophets. "And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers[5]."

Overcome by her mingled emotions of anxiety and joy, the holy Virgin mother gave vent to her feelings in words expressive of some little haste and agitation. She was, indeed, hardly mistress of her own expressions. Delight and amazement were struggling in her heart; for we must conclude from the tone of the Evangelist's writings that she and Joseph must have stood for a minute or two, as much lost in astonishment at the powers of mind which they now saw awakened in their Son, as were the doctors themselves at the wondrous intelligence displayed in His answers, and the character of the questions which He addressed to them for information. Breaking at last through all restraint, she spoke in words that betrayed emotions which not even the presence of the doctors could repress. "Son, why hast Thou thus dealt with us? Behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing." The artless reply of the Son is in beautiful contrast with the anxious reproach implied in the mother's words. "How is it that ye sought Me?" was His natural reply; "wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" The

[5] Luke ii. 47.

innocent surprise of the Son, it is to be observed, was not excited by the fact that His parents had come to *look for* Him, but that they should have had any doubt at all as to where to *find* Him. It was to Him so natural, so necessary, to be where He was, that He could not understand that there could have been the least difficulty in His parents' minds as to His whereabouts. And if, as perhaps we ought, we understand Him to say that it was His duty to be not "about His Father's *business*," but "in His Father's *buildings*[6]," the answer becomes even the more significant, and the more consonant with the question of His mother.

Let it be observed, these are the *very first words* which are on record of the Lord Jesus! And wonderful words they were, even above the comprehension of either His mother or Joseph. What could He mean in speaking of His Father's business, when, so far as they believed He knew, *Joseph's* house and business were those of His *father?* For the Virgin, in her exquisite delicacy and purity of heart, had manifestly never yet informed her Divine Son (even as she had never herself acquainted Joseph) of the secret of His real Parentage. Divinely as it was communicated to her, divinely she so left it to be intimated to Him. In all outward reverence and matronly duty she had ever treated Joseph as her true husband, and he had requited her confidence with equal tenderness and manly generosity. All that was his was hers, and all her cares and anxieties, all the tremendous responsibilities attaching to her supernatural maternity, he undertook in the sight of God to share with her. Whom then could her Son mean by *His Father?*

It would seem that, upon this great occasion of Jesus attaining His full condition as a member of the Jewish polity, His

[6] ἐν τοῖς τοῦ Πατρός may, however, include both.

mind began to be for the first time awakened to the sense of Who and what He Himself was. This truth once firmly established in His mind, He would, young as He was, marvel that they, who must have known all and more than He then did, should not have anticipated that He could not act otherwise at that time nor be elsewhere than where and as they found Him. There seems, therefore, something of a *reproof* in the words in which He answered His mother. But it is a reproof only by contrast; for we may be sure that Jesus, not yet by many years entering upon His ministry, still in all respects a youth, and owing all filial devotion to His earthly parents, would never so far have forgotten the duty of a son, nor willingly pained the heart of so fond and anxious a mother. Indeed the Evangelist seems to evince an anxiety that no such intention should be attributed to Jesus, for he immediately adds that "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them."

For eighteen years more had Mary to wait, keeping all the sayings and all the actions of her Son stored within her heart for devout contemplation and reflection, abiding God's own good time when it should please Him to afford her a solution of all the strange and wondrous things of which she was both a witness and a partaker.

During these long years of preparation did Jesus continue growing in wisdom as in years, (clearing away, as the Evangelist expresses it, all obstacles to His perfect understanding of the Truth,) and in the favour with which He was regarded both by God and man.

The veil which was partially lifted to give us this scanty view of the early days of our Lord again falls over this lengthened period of eighteen years. When again it rises, a generation has passed away. Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, have long been at their rest; Joseph himself is gathered

to his fathers [6]; and Jesus of Nazareth, probably assisted by His brethren [7], has supported His mother by the trade of a carpenter, which Joseph on his death had left them for an inheritance.

[6] See Mark vi. 3.

[7] See below, note on Brethren of Jesus.

NOTE ON THE PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH AND MICAH.

EIGHT hundred years before the birth of John, the Jewish Prophet Isaiah had uttered these words under the inspiration of the Spirit of God:

> "Behold the Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
> And shall call His Name Immanuel[1]."

It is necessary to explain the circumstances under which this great Prophecy was uttered.

In the days of Jotham, king of Judah, who reigned from B.C. 758 to B.C. 742, a league had been formed between Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, son of Remaliah, the usurping king of Israel, for an invasion of the territories of Judah[2]. The project, however, was for some reason not carried into effect at the time, but was deferred until the reign of Ahaz, the son of Jotham, when they commenced to lay siege to Jerusalem[3]. The measure of Judah was not, however, yet filled up; and Jehovah interposed to save His own city from destruction. The word of the Lord consequently came to the Prophet Isaiah commanding him to take with him his son Shear-Jashub, and to go forth to meet Ahab by the "conduit of the Upper Pool" which was in the "highway of the 'fuller's field[4].'" The king had gone thither, no doubt accompanied by his chief officers and engineers, to stop up or divert the waters outside the city, that they might

[1] Isa. vii. 14.
[2] 2 Kings xv. 37.
[3] 2 Kings xvi. 3. Isa. vii. 1—4; xxiii. 6—11.
[4] Isa. vii. 3.

not afford a supply to his enemies. The same course was in fact afterwards pursued by his son and successor Hezekiah [5], on the occasion of the invasion of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. There would be, therefore, an assembly of the principal men of the nation present to hear the Word of the Lord.

The Prophet was commissioned to assure the king of Judah (evil and unbelieving as he was) that it was not the will of the Almighty that Jerusalem should be delivered as yet into the hands of her enemies, but that within threescore and five years from that time the kingdom of Israel itself should be broken up *for ever* [6]. As Ahaz remained silent and unbelieving, the Almighty condescended by the mouth of the Prophet to offer him any sign he pleased in token that the tidings conveyed to him were really divinely sent. On the king still continuing obstinate, the Prophet indignantly declared, in the hearing of the assembled personages, that, as he had refused in unbelief to ask a sign by which God might comfort those who believed on Him, Jehovah would for His own Name's sake, give a sign Himself.

Isaiah had taken with him, as we have seen, by Divine command, his son Shear-Jashub, whom he had previously so named as a living witness of the promise that, even when Judah should be dismembered and carried out of her own country, still "a remnant shall return."

"Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign" said the Prophet. And the sign was that a virgin should conceive and

[5] 2 Chron. xxxii. 1—4.

[6] "The desolation of the Ten Tribes by the Assyrians under Shalmaneser took place about twenty years after the date of this prophecy. It is clear, therefore, that this is not [the event] referred to, but rather that when Esarhaddon not only carried away *the remnant* of Israel, but settled new inhabitants in the country, thus completing the subversion of the Ten Tribes. *This* was exactly sixty-five years from the time of this remarkable Prophecy." —Dr. Kitto, Pict. Bible, note on Isaiah vii. 8.

bear a Son, and that His Name should be Immanuel. And he added, before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, "the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings[7]." The difficulty felt in this passage, supposing it to have a Messianic reference, is that of understanding how the *future* birth of Immanuel could be a *present* sign to Ahaz. But our Lord Himself gave just such a sign to the Jews at their demand, when He said, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up[8]." And in fact the Prophet appeals to the universally acknowledged truth of the coming birth of the Messiah for the confirmation of his words; for, if Messiah is to come and redeem His people, His people must still be in their own land, even though menaced for the time by the armies of Syria and Ephraim, and even doomed to undergo captivity in the interim at the hand of the Assyrian monarch, for so Nebuchadnezzar is here styled. Referring, then, to the Child whom he held in his arms, and whose name testified to his own faith in God's promise, the Prophet declares that, "before the Child shall know how to choose between good and evil," that is, before he shall have reached the years of moral distinction, the two confederate kings shall cease to reign.

Pekah, accordingly, was slain by Hoshea, and Rezin killed in the conquest of Syria by Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, within the space of between two and three years after this declaration.

It is worthy of remark that the name of the Child, relating remotely to the return from the Babylonian captivity, is also the symbol of the return of the 200,000 whom Pekah had driven out of Judah into his own country.

The whole circumstances of this striking Messianic Prophecy are sufficiently remarkable to induce the Evangelist specially to

[7] Isa. vii. 16. [8] John ii. 19.

notice the "fulfilment"—that is the *plenary accomplishment*—of the Prophecy in the birth of Jesus from the Virgin Mary.

About the same time another Jewish Prophet, Micah by name, had thus prophetically apostrophized the little village of Bethlehem,—

> "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah,
> (Though thou be) little among the thousands of Judah;
> (Yet) out of thee shall He come forth unto me,
> (That is to be) ruler in Israel[9]."

The application of this passage to the Messiah has long since been agreed upon on all hands. The Prophet addresses the little village in a strain of admiration that, small and insignificant as she is, too small indeed to have been reckoned in the time of Joshua among the cities of Israel[1], yet to her would he vouchsafe the honour above all other towns or cities of Judah, of becoming the birth-place of the Messiah. Micah adds to the ordinary name Bethlehem, "House of Bread," the original designation of Ephrath, or Ephratah, "field of fruit," which it bore as early as the days of Jacob, whose beloved wife Rachel was buried near the place[2]. The Prophet's selection of the second appellation seems to have proceeded from his perception of the blessings, both spiritual and temporal, which should proceed from it in the person of the Messiah. S. Matthew, on the other hand, recording the quotation of the Sanhedrim to Herod, applies the term "land of Judah[3]" having reference, probably, from his own point of view to the *royal* character of the village. Either name was, in point of fact, indifferently applied[4]. In a similar way the "thousands of Judah" in S. Matthew's hands become the "Princes of Judah," with an expansion of the purely theocratic sense. For the thousands, or

[9] Micah v. 2.
[2] Gen. xxxv. 19; xlviii. 7.
[4] Judges xvii. 7, 8. Ruth i. 1. 1 Sam. xvii. 12.
[1] See Josh. xv.
[3] Matt. ii. 6.

villages which could muster a thousand men, were presided over in the days of the Judges by a Chiliarch or Prince, who therefore personifies the town which he represents. In the Evangelical point of view he is accordingly brought forward in contrast to "the Ruler" who should be "great unto the ends of the earth." And the true nature of His rule is therein set forth as that of a Shepherd who, like David, should "feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance[5]."

[5] Ps. lxxviii. 71. Isa. xl. 11.

CHAPTER II.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT SIX MONTHS AND A HALF, FROM APRIL, A.D. 26, TO THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER IN THE SAME YEAR.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

SECT. 1.—First awakening of the Baptist in the Perichorus of Jordan.
SECT. 2.—Baptism of Jesus.
SECT. 3.—Temptation of Jesus in the wilderness of Judæa.

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. Matt.	S. Mark.	S. Luke.
iii. 1—4.	i. 4—6.	... ...
5—10.	... ...	... ...
11, 12.	7, 8.	... ...
13—17.	9—11.	iii. 21—23.
iv. 1—11.	12, 13	iv. 1—13.

THE FIRST MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Wilderness of Judæa, A.D. 26.

A PERIOD of more than thirty years has now expired since the last notice of John, afterwards surnamed "the Baptist." It was no doubt upon the death of his parents, when his domestic ties were altogether dissolved, that he betook himself to the wilderness, and entered upon the life of an Eremite. The wilderness, as it is called, into which he withdrew, was that sparsely inhabited tract of land which lies between the hill country of Judæa, and the Dead Sea. Here in some "leafy covert[1]" or limestone cave of the hillside he made his abode, avoiding the throng of the towns, and devoting himself by

[1] Stanley's Sinai, p. 312. See also 2 Kings vi. 2.

continual prayer, and the study of the Prophets and the Law, to the High and Holy Office to which he had been from infancy dedicated. He was not, it may be observed, altogether alone in his retirement. The open portion of the country which he had chosen for his home, harboured a few other dwellers besides himself. That ascetic and rigidly observant class of the Jewish people, who as far transcended the Pharisees, as the Pharisees themselves exceeded the rest of the nation, in rigidness of devotion and observance of the strict Mosaic ordinances, had settlements in the northern part of the region which the Baptist selected for his own main abode. Their tenets had naturally many points in common; and the determined abstinence from all habits of luxury, the stern self-denying rules of life, and the tendency to meditative study on the part of the Essenes, would naturally beget a sympathy between him and them, and perhaps pave the way in some measure for a readier recognition of his office, when at length he entered upon his public ministrations.

From a comparison of the different accounts it would seem that, while the original resort of the Baptist was the uninhabited tract of country west of the Dead Sea, the whole of the Perichorus (or district watered by the southern outfall of the Jordan) was, in time and by turn, the scene of his labours. The neighbourhood of his native home was unsuited for his purpose, as he required water pure and fresh, such as the Jordan alone offered him, for a baptism which implied total immersion. There seem in fact to have been three principal scenes of his ministry marked out in the Gospels: 1, the wilderness of Judæa west of the northern half of the Dead Sea; 2, the Perichorus of the Jordan, including the large tract of Peræa upon the eastern bank; and 3, a spot somewhere in the south of Judæa[2].

[2] See below, in loco.

It was now the spring of the year 778 A.U.C. John, the son of Zacharias, was just turned of thirty years of age; and Jesus, the son of Mary, wanted about five months, or rather more [3], of that age, when the word of God came to the former in the wilderness of Judæa. Then it was that John, having reached the age which the Levitical law [4] assigned to the commencement of the ministerial office, felt the inward arousing of the Spirit which bade him go forth upon his work as the Awakener of Israel, the Forerunner of the Gospel of Jehovah. Issuing therefore from his solitary cell, whether leafy tent [5] or limestone cave, forth through the stillness and silence of the Desert rang the first echoes of the Voice of one crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight [6]." If they would receive it, this was the Elijah which was to come. Standing by the fords of Jordan, while the tall thick rushes and the jungle canes shook and rustled in the vernal winds, and the pebbly stones of the claybanks glistened in the sun that shone upon the hill-slopes bordering the river's bed, there Santon-like, with long untended hair streaming in the wind, with the native cloak of camel's hair cast around his shoulders, and his girdle of hide strapped around his naked body, the weird figure of the Inspired Prophet gathered round him those in Israel who acknowledged the need of a new birth as the indispensable condition of entrance into the kingdom of God.

It would be a matter of much interest could we identify the

[3] More strictly speaking, about five months and two days. See above, p. 53, Luke i. 24. 26.

[4] Num. iv. 3.

[5] See Stanley's Sinai, p. 312.

[6] Luke iii. 4. The prophecy of Isaiah is generally interpreted of the preparations made by the pioneers of an eastern prince for his easy transit over a country destitute of roads. It ought not, however, to be overlooked that in the cases of the "Cities of Refuge" (Josh. xx.), "it was the Sanhedrin's business to make the ways to those cities convenient by enlarging them, and by removing every stop against which one might either stumble or dash his -d what was the true City of Refuge but Christ?—See Bp. Lightfoot Heb. i. 105.

exact scene of John's early baptismal functions. But it seems impossible now to do so otherwise than in the most general way. It is clear that, when once the token of the Spirit sent him forth upon his heraldic errand, he confined his labours necessarily to no one particular spot. Beyond the broad indications of his missionary wanderings, we are unable to extend our inquiries. The border country of the Jordan, that tract which stretched from the north of the Dead Sea nearly up to the south of Galilee, enclosed between the mountains of Palestine on the west and the Peræan ranges on the east, all witnessed the ministry of the second Elijah, whether it was exercised by the fords of Jericho, or in Bethany beyond Jordan, or by the springs of Ænon near Salim. For the language of the Evangelists puts it out of question that different spots formed at different periods the platform of his ministerial work; and we can but suppose that his changes of locality correspond with the differences of opportunity which might be presented to him by the different periods of the year, or the varying circumstances of the country. Still it is not likely that his first essay would be made at any great distance from the spot which he had chosen for the scene of his long preparation; and as this was in the wilderness of Judæa, and in all probability in that part which from its eastern slope looked down upon the plains of Jericho, it can hardly be a forced view of the matter which would assign the place of the original passage of the Israelites as the true locality of the first summons of the Voice. For it is no fanciful notion which links on the later development of the spiritual history of man to points in the natural history of his typical progress, seeing that those points were fixed by the will of the same God by whom the two were alike ordained. And it does seem not improbable, in the absence of any means of positive identification, that the scene of the actual passage of the Jordan should have been determined as that of the

future descent into its waters which should usher the faithful Israel into the "Kingdom of God." Wherever may have been the place of the first utterance of the Voice, it must surely have been where there was the readiest access for those whom it must have sought to influence first, the dwellers in that Holy City which constituted the heart of the nation. And this view is confirmed by the language of both Matthew and Mark, the only two Evangelists whose testimony bears upon this period. For the former places *Jerusalem first* in the order of applicants for the baptism of John. And that this is not a mere unconsidered statement is apparent from the order and juxtaposition of the localities whence the people flocked to the teaching of the Second Elijah. For the order is, first, Jerusalem; second, Judæa; third, all the region round about Jordan. This at least is the record of Matthew, who must be considered as the chief authority upon the subject; for, as a Levite and writing for Jews, we may be sure that he treated the subject in its true theocratic aspect. And it is remarkable that the account of Mark, who so generally adopts the arrangement of his immediate predecessor, except in point of chronology, *here diverts from his plan*, and places Judæa before Jerusalem. This deviation was not objectless. He writes from the Roman, not from the theological, point of view, and hence in his writings the *district* naturally takes precedence of the *city*.

By the western bank of Jordan, then, the Baptist took his stand to proclaim again the mingled tidings of terror and of hope, that the prophecies of the Old Covenant were on the point of receiving their full development, and that in himself the order of the great line of the Prophets of Israel had found their last and greatest type. On the verge of the Old and of the New, like that Star "last in the train of night, if better it belong not to the dawn[1]," so blazed forth the light of the

[1] Milton, Paradise Lost, bk. v. ver. 167, 168.

Baptist, that burning and shining lamp in the darkness, to which The Greater than he bore witness that men "were willing for a season to rejoice in his light[8]." In the midst of the rugged scenery upon which his gaze, whichever way it turned, must have glanced from ridge to ridge, over valley, watercourse, or plain, there must have risen before his mind the coming progress of the Great King, before whom he was sent to prepare the way by raising every valley, levelling every mountainous ridge, straightening the routes that had hitherto been circuitous, and smoothing down the rugged inequalities of the common, but little traversed ways.

Wild and rugged as was this the last Great Prophet of the waning law, it was perhaps the very weirdlike aspect, the monotonous cry, by which he marked his mission, which caused the mass of his countrymen to flock to his preaching. For they did resort to him not in sects or sections, not by twos or threes, by parties or by factions, but as a nation accepting the preacher in the right of his office, and acknowledging that the burden of his text was justified by their own condition.

It may not without good reason be believed that the time of John's first preaching coincided with the commencement of the spring influx of people to the Paschal Feast, and that the locality was the fords of Jordan near Bethabara, or the Peræan Bethany. He would choose naturally a spot where his message would be the soonest heard, and whence it would be most easily and readily transmitted throughout the country. And such a spot would be that where the caravans from Galilee would cross the river from the East after the circuit which they had made to avoid the passage through the country of the Samaritans. Thither, then, if this were really the place of his first preaching, resorted the dwellers in the Holy City; followed as the tidings spread, by the general population of Judæa and

[8] John v. 35.

of all the Perichorus, or country lying between the twin ranges of mountains that enclose the valley of the historic river of Palestine. There, as they individually made confession of their sins, did the Baptist plunge them beneath the waves of the Jordan, baptizing them with water to repentance. Unlike the after baptism of the Christ, the baptism of John could not confer the *Holy Ghost*, nor of itself remission of sins. It led the penitent to look up to Christ, and taught him to resort to him for the confirmation of his own work[9]. Those, therefore, who resorted to John's baptism could have been only those who felt within themselves that utter corruption of the moral being, and that deep need of pardon, which Jesus afterwards described as the very state of heart which should enable its possessor to "see the Kingdom of God." His coming was not to call the "*righteous*," as they were styled who observed the positive commands of the law, but *sinners* to repentance. And therefore it is not difficult to see the aspect under which both Malachi described, and John preached, the coming of the day of the Lord. It

[9] "A baptism exacting, as a condition of its reception, a change of mind and life with a view to pardon from Christ. And thus he acknowledged that his baptism was only temporary and manuductory to the baptism of Christ, which brings remission of sins."—Wordsworth, Gk. Test., on Mark i. 4.

So also Lange (Theophylact.) iii. 174.—"Meyer rightly: To be received from the Messiah, and not, as Hoffman in the Schriftbeweis asserts, as assured by John's baptism. Thus it denotes the preparatory reference of John's baptism to Christ, or to the baptism of the the Holy Ghost."—On Mk. i. 4.

"This baptism differed from all the former Old Testament washings by its special reference to the now nearly approaching kingdom of Messiah; while the distinction between the baptism of John and the subsequent Christian baptism was, that the former prepared and separated for the kingdom of God, and the latter admitted within it. On this account, baptism by the disciples of Jesus, and even by the Lord Himself at the commencement of His public ministry, may be regarded as only a continuation of this preparatory baptism of John. Christian baptism, the baptism of consecration, could not be instituted till the New Covenant had been instituted in Christ's blood, the throne of the kingdom of heaven ascended, and the promise of the Holy Ghost fulfilled."—Oosterzee, i. p. 109.

would be a "terrible" and a "dreadful day" to those who, resting, like the Pharisees, upon the mere physical descent from Abraham and the observance of the Ceremonial Law, strove by the addition of unnecessary formalities to gloss over the hypocrisy of their lives even to their own eyes. For while the coming kingdom would be one of "mercy," and not of "sacrifice[1]," it would be so only to those who understood and would accept the terms upon which it offered the grace of God. And John did not scruple to place the opposite side of the new covenant of grace, in its aspect of wrath, in the very strongest terms of warning and of threatening to those whose consciences, hardened by long habits of evil, could be awakened by no lighter or gentler appeal. The day was at hand when all must make their choice, when "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision[2]" would count in themselves for any thing, and when they would not all be found to be the children of Abraham which were of his seed[3].

This was the language which John addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees on observing them amongst the multitudes who thronged the river's side. "O generation of vipers," was the stern exclamation of the Prophet, "who hath warned *you* to flee from the wrath to come[4]?" "Brood of serpents[5]!" again they are presented in the same view by our Lord Himself, as implying that, instead of being the children of the Promise, they were instruments in the hands of the Prince of Darkness. Without an entire change of heart, a radical alteration in their modes of viewing the relation of man to God, it was impossible for them to enter into the coming spiritual kingdom; and their presence at a ceremony which presupposed

[1] Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7; and cf. Hos. vi. 6. Prov. xxi. 3.
[2] 1 Cor. vii. 19. Gal. v. 6.
[3] Rom. ix. 6—8.
[4] Matt. iii. 7.
[5] Matt. xii. 34.

the absolute necessity of such a change was but the final touch to crown the consummate hypocrisy and wickedness of their lives. By the double figure of the axe lying ready at the root of the trees[6], and the advent of the Winnower with the shovel, he laid before them the most solemn warning of their impending judgment. Stung and exasperated by the just rebukes of the uncompromising preacher, who scrupled not to expose them before the people to whom they had hitherto professed to act with the authority of spiritual wisdom, they retired *unbaptized* from the scene of John's labours, and thus "they *frustrated*[7] the counsel of God against themselves[8]."

From day to day the Baptist continued the labours of his first year's ministry, until the setting in of the autumnal rains would necessitate a retirement into the shelter of his solitary abode. It was rather more than five months, after the first commencement of his work, when the great event occurred which was to mark to the Herald the point from which his own greatness should decline, and that of Him to whom he bore faithful witness should gradually increase to its height[9].

SECTION II.

AND now again the preacher issues from his lonely cell, and again at his voice pour out the many thousands of Judæa and the country bordering upon Jordan. We do not hear that the Galilæans, as a body, resorted to the banks of the ancient river for the baptismal rite. The reason of their

[6] This is the true meaning of the passage, Matt. iii. 10.
[7] See marginal reading in Bibles, and next ref.
[8] Luke vii. 30.
[9] John iii. 28—31.

omission by the Evangelist may be that they were a mixed and hybrid people, amongst whom there was a considerable sprinkling of Gentile blood. Still we cannot doubt that many from Galilee were to be found amongst the votaries of the new and great Prophet, just as we know that large numbers came up from the same northern tract of Canaanitish land to attend the great festivals at Jerusalem.

We may conceive that it was in the autumn days that John first became aware that he should behold the indubitable sign of the Messiah. It has been a subject of much controversy whether John was or was not acquainted with our blessed Saviour before that momentous hour when He presented Himself to His Forerunner for baptism. The question, however, does not really seem to admit of so much controversy as has been fastened upon it. How could John possibly have interfered with his objection to baptize Jesus, had he not known *who* He was? The difficulty, such as it is, appears to arise solely out of the Baptist's subsequent statement that "*he knew Him not*[1]." But the explanation seems to be contained in the Baptist's own words. It had been expressly revealed to him that the Spirit should visibly descend upon the Person who should baptize with the Holy Ghost; in other words, this visible *Pneumaturgia* should point out the true Messiah of Israel. But that descent did not take place until *after* the ascent of Jesus from the waters of the Jordan; hence it follows that John's words *twice distinctly repeated* refer solely to the revelation of Jesus as the Christ. It is inconceivable that John should not have known Jesus as the Son of Mary, and as his own Cousin or relative after the flesh. It is quite out of all natural supposition that his mother, at least, should not have revealed something of what she herself knew to her own son upon a subject in which he himself was so personally interested,

[1] John i. 31. 33.

and in which she had certainly at one time testified to some intuitive knowledge[2]. The only question is, *how far any thing was known even by His own family* of the true nature and character of Jesus Christ. If His own parents knew Him not, then we need not be perplexed that others did not know Him. And that *they did not know Him* in His true character, as the Divine Son of the Father, must be evident to any one who has really and thoroughly considered the subject. From the earliest period that we know of His life, the Virgin Mother was accustomed to *lay up* in her heart not only His own sayings, but every thing which bore upon His life and character. She *laid them up* because she did not fully understand them, and she was content in faith and patience to wait the time when their meaning should be gradually unfolded to her understanding. And when we have regard to what the Scriptures teach us of the union of the Divine with the purely human nature of the Christ, and what we know of the way in which He availed Himself, as He grew to manhood, of all the ordinary channels and means of instruction, we may reverently ask, Did the full knowledge of who He really was come even upon Himself otherwise than gradually, as His mind and powers became ripened and developed into maturity[3]? If this were so, then we need not to argue the point whether the Christ and His Baptist had ever met before. The common festivals at Jerusalem, which required the presence of all the adult males of the population three times a year at the temple, would have afforded them many opportunities of meeting. John's own words are clear enough when he objects to baptize Jesus. His own baptism was for a formal renunciation of sins, preceded by a confession of them, as an indispensable condition preliminary to admission into the Spiritual Kingdom. He knew enough of Jesus that this was unnecessary on His part.

[2] Luke i. 42, 43.

[3] See above, p. 114—115.

It was a nation "dead in trespasses and sins" that he sought to bury in the waters of the Jordan. What relation, then, could this solemn abjuration of the national wickedness and hypocrisy bear to One of whom he knew at least enough to assure him that it would be wholly out of place? And this is perfectly consistent both with what we hear afterwards of John's character, and with his own language some months later, when he points out our Lord by the name of "Lamb of God[4]"—a style which is new to him until after the Baptism. A man of earnest and humble character would be likely to say to one whom he felt to be his own superior in holiness and virtue precisely what the Baptist did say under such circumstances. If it were a question between the two, John would naturally say it was more consonant with their respective characters that *he* should bow to the hands of *Jesus*, rather than Jesus to himself. Had he known at the moment fully *Who* Jesus was, his language must have been very different from this. There would have been a deeper awe, and a more solemn recognition of Jesus, not as merely his superior and his better, which he would feel him to be as a *man*, but as the manifestation of the Incarnate God, demanding the homage and worship of the last and greatest of Israel's Prophets.

BETHABARA. BEGINNING OF OCTOBER, A.D. 26.

It was now the beginning of the autumn month of October, at the time when the annual caravans were coming up to Judæa for the third great Feast of Tabernacles.

As every candidate for John's baptism was plunged under the waves of Jordan by the hand of John himself, it would necessarily occupy some months of labour before his ministry was completed. In point of fact, the close of his ministry coincided,

[4] John i. 36.

not with the commencement of that of Jesus but, solely with his own imprisonment and consequent death. Hence the numbers of the people could have undergone no perceptible diminution when he is found still standing upon the banks of the river in the autumn of the year. If the reasoning upon which the chronology here adopted is based be correct, John began to baptize at the close of the month of April, almost immediately after he had attained his thirtieth year.

And this conclusion is strengthened also by the fact that the commencement of the Levitical ministry was fixed by the Mosaic Law at the age of thirty[5]. Both analogy, therefore, and the fixed reverence for times and seasons inherent in the Jewish mind, would suggest that age as the appropriate one for the commencement of John's own ministry. And if we seek to fix a period for the inauguration of the ministry of the Christ, to what period of His life could we so naturally turn as to the corresponding time of that of His own forerunner? We can but presume that he would be desirous of entering upon His great work as soon as ever He should find the proper occasion of its commencement; and we learn from the actual record of S. Luke that He *also*[6] was just about thirty years of age when He actually did enter upon the work of His ministry. And as John began to preach at the close of April, so would Jesus commence His own work about the beginning of October, when, being a little more than five months younger than John, He would be just nearing the close of His thirtieth, and about enter upon the first month of His thirty-first, year.

[5] Num. iv. 3, &c.

[6] This, which is the natural and simple, is surely the true, rendering of the much-disputed passage, Luke iii. 23. The Evangelist had previously been speaking of the Baptist's ministry, and he intimates clearly in these words that both the Messiah and the Forerunner were of the prescribed age, or nearly so—more or less—when they undertook their public functions for the first time.

THE GREAT DAY OF THE ATONEMENT. OCTOBER 10.

It was in the beginning of October, then, and, according to the view here taken, on the great Day of Atonement itself that Jesus, having attained to the Levitical age, set out for the spot wherein He knew that John was, by preaching and baptizing, preparing the way for the spiritual kingdom which He came to organize in person. It was apparently towards the close of the day, after that great numbers of the people had been baptized [7], that Jesus presented Himself to His relative, and requested to be included among "the remnant of the pure Israelites," who came to seek admission into the Kingdom of God. The amazement of John at the request was, as has been seen, perfectly intelligible, even though he had no true insight into the real character of the Christ. But his objections were overruled by a higher power than his own. Jesus explained to him that compliance with His request was the only way by which they could conjointly [8] satisfy the requirements of that old religion under which they were both born and reared; and which, in point of fact, was superseded only because its significance and power, as well as its necessity, had become merged in that new religion towards which John's baptism was the first and indispensable step.

Thus, then, on the brink of that ancient river of Jordan, across the bed of which the Israel of old had entered into the land of their Divine inheritance, stood face to face the Herald and the King of new Israel. The last of the long line of Israel's glorious Prophets gazed upon the sole living representative of her traditionary Monarchs, the miraculously born offspring of decaying age upon the Divine Child of virgin youth. Fit emblems these of a waning system, and a creed of vigorous adolescence! On the reedy banks of Jordan the

[7] Luke iii. 21. [8] See below, next page, ἡμῖν, Matt. iii. 15.

Law and the Prophets yielded up their delegated power; and the Covenant of Sinai, now decaying and waxed old, began thenceforth to vanish away [9].

Into the rapid waters of the river, then, now running in full channel, as in the time when the first Joshua led the people of God into its bed, descended the Prophet and the King.

When Jesus urged upon John His demand for admission to his emblematic rite, He did so on the grounds that "thus it behoved *them* to fulfil all righteousness [1]." What allusion then is contained in these words of our Lord? and what was the particular δικαίωμα or positive command in the Law of Moses to which He called His prophet's attention as demanding as much the obedience of John as of Himself? The question must be answered from the point of view under which Christ is represented to us both in the prophetical declarations of the Old Testament, and the apostolic language in the New. He is there represented as the *Great High Priest* of the New Covenant [2], absorbing into Himself the office, and filling up in His own perfect Image the imperfections of the successive order, of the High Priests of the Old. He must then be duly consecrated for His office with a solemnity corresponding to, but far surpassing, that under which the Levitical Priests received their ministerial commission. Now in the Divine order, for the consecration of Aaron, we find that Moses was enjoined first to bathe him with water [3], and then to anoint him with the consecrating oil [4].

That, then, which Moses and Aaron were divinely enjoined to observe and to do in this respect was purely, like all other ordinances of a ministerial character in the Law, of a typical and emblematic nature. It pointed to a higher and a greater

[9] Heb. viii. 13.
[2] Heb. iii. 1; ix. 11; x. 21.
[1] Matt. iii. 15.
[3] Exod. xxix. 4.
[4] Exod. xxix. 7.

consecration in times to come. And when the time had truly come, it would be impossible to recognize the true High Priest, save in One who should present the perfect antitype, in the circumstances of His consecration, as well as in the office which He administered, of that succession of Priests who "were not suffered to continue by reason of death[5]." For this reason did Christ, in so far as He was the Representative *not of the nation, but of the Priest*, submit to the bath of the Jordan waters. It was preliminary to the *unction* which He was to receive from *on high*, which should at once consecrate Him and authoritatively commission Him for the office of the Great High Priest of the Spiritual Kingdom of God. Coming out of the waters, His Spirit at that solemn epoch of His life sought immediate communion with the Father; and as He prayed in the full power of His deep inward consciousness of spiritual life, the promised sign was given, and the Unction descended from above upon the accepted Priest of the New Covenant of Jehovah: "The Heavens were opened unto (for) Him, and he (John) saw the Spirit of God descending (in a bodily shape[6]) like a dove, and lighting[7] upon Him[8]." This descent of the Holy Spirit was that which was needed to confirm and fulfil the consecration of Jesus. It was that of which the anointing confection[9], poured lavishly upon the head of Aaron[1] and his descendants, was but an earthly type and figure. The plenitude of the Spirit was within Him, not given by measure[2], partially or sparingly, but in the very fulness of that Godhead in which He Himself was One in the

[5] Heb. vii. 23. [6] Luke iii. 22.

[7] S. John (i. 33) represents the Baptist as saying that the Spirit remained visibly upon the head of Jesus. Probably the appearance remained for a sufficient time (like the tongues of fire on the Day of Pentecost) to create assurance that it was no optical illusion.

[8] Matt. iii. 16. [9] Exod. xxx. 23—25.

[1] Ps. cxxxiii. 2. [2] John iii. 34.

intimate and conscious union both with It and with the Father.

This then was the token to John of the Messiah, (for only He could be intended by the language of His description,) namely the visible descent of the Spirit from Heaven and its abode upon His head[3]. As Jesus came up from the waters of Jordan, the heavens were seen to part asunder, and a ray of the *Shechinah* or the Holy Flame of the Divine Presence, which had formerly hallowed the Holy of Holies in the Temple, now descended in a gentle undulation, and, assuming the form of a dove in the outlines of its soft majestic splendour, rested upon the head of the newly baptized Jesus. At the same time, to confirm the sign, came a voice from Heaven attesting the true Sonship and office of the present Messiah in the words, "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am (and have been) well pleased[4]."

That the appearance, whatever it was, was manifested by the display of *light*, we may take for granted, not only on account of the probability given to the supposition by the opening of the heavens, nor of the apparent allusion to the fact in the opening verses of S. John's Gospel, but because it was the recognized symbol in Jewish religious history for the manifestation of the Divine Glory. That the appearance was that of an actual dovelike form is not altogether *decisively* asserted even by the words of S. Luke; but if it was so, as it seems to have been, a peculiar and double appropriateness may be discerned in the emblem. The motion which is attributed to the *descent* is that which is ascribed to the Spirit of God in the account of the Creation by Moses; and the return of the dove to the ark after the mundane baptism by the deluge may well have

[3] John i. 33.

[4] Matt. iii. 17. S. Mark's version (i. 11) has "Thou art," &c. Both declarations were probably heard, the one by John, the other by Jesus.

found its antitype in the settling down of that emblem of peace upon the head of the Son of God.

It has been naturally a matter of question whether the vision of the Spirit was confined to the internal perception of Jesus and John, or was beheld also by the assembled multitude. The matter may be argued[5] from the wording of the narrative itself[6]; from the internal probabilities and analogy of the case.

The consecration of the Great High Priest of the Christian Covenant was thus formally and perfectly consummated. Jesus, however, did not at once proceed to the active discharge of the work of His Ministry. There was much yet to be done before He manifested Himself to Israel. An awful period ay before Him ere His spirit, strengthened by the consciousness of inward power, addressed itself to the fearful work of man's redemption.

SECTION III.

THE whole preliminaries of the mediatorial office of Christ were now completed. Consecrated as the Great High Priest of the

[5] There is nothing whatever in the language of the Evangelists to suggest the idea that any other than the two Persons for whom it was manifestly intended beheld the Divine vision.

[6] Upon the second point the following authorities may be consulted, coinciding with the view here taken of this subject:—"Theodore of Mopsuestia says, 'The descent of the Spirit was not seen by all those who were present, but only by means of a spiritual vision by John, as it was the manner of the Prophets to see in the midst of many that which was invisible to all. For it would not be proper to say that John bare record, and said that *he* had seen the Spirit, if all those present participated in his beholding.' In fact, if the phenomenon had been visible to the bodily eyes, the 'record' of John would have lost all significance. The superiority of his position would then be entirely gone."—Hengstenberg on S. John, i. 82, 83.

"The action continues even after the coming up, and is divided into three

true Israel of God, His spirit was brought into the fullest communion with the Holy Spirit itself, of which His body had now become the second and great temple upon the Earth[7]. And now He entered upon a new state of His relations to the Father. The fulness of the Godhead was united to His human soul and spirit; and it cannot be presumptuous to say that the immediate effect of the tremendous influence must have been for a time an overpowering and incomprehensible constraint. As at the close of His ministerial career in the garden of Gethsemane, so we may scarcely doubt that now at its commencement there must have been a mighty and all-pervading influence exercised upon His soul. It is not necessary to enter the question how the purity of the Almighty Being could permit the exercise of the singular and terrible power which Satan is represented as putting forth during the conflict. Such questions are beside the real issue; for we can know nothing of the limits of power, or their occasional extension, as fixed or relaxed by the Almighty, for the purposes of the moral govern-

parts, viz. the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Spirit, and the utterance of the voice. But that all this did not form a kind of spectacle, as it were, which took place before the assembled multitude, but, on the contrary, that it was beheld only by Christ and S. John, appears quite clear from Matt. iii. 16. A presentiment not clearly understood, and produced by the mighty effects of the Spirit, may have penetrated the multitude for an instant at this sublime moment, when the blossom of Heaven descended on Earth; but the occurrence itself they did not witness."—Olshausen, i. 178.

"The Spirit, the invisible cause of every thing visible, contains in itself the ground of all things; the revelation and communication of Himself is a predicate of His nature. The opening of the heaven, i. e. of the world of the Spirit, hence is nothing else than the revealing of the spiritual world to the spirit; every revelation of Divine things is a tearing asunder of the heaven, or descent of the Spirit (Isa. lxiv. 1; Ezek. i. 1; Acts of the Apos. vii. 55). As little as the opening of the heaven is to be considered in a material sense, equally as little must it be considered as a mere imagination; it is a real effect produced by the Spirit upon the spirit."—Olshausen, i. 179.

[7] See Bp. Hind's "Three Temples," &c.

ment of the world, to the chief of the disobedient angels. Curiosity and speculation are thrown away in such matters; and can be, if not actually injurious, simply useless. Such tremendous events as the Incarnation, Temptation, Transfiguration, and Crucifixion of Christ are all of them *antecedently* improbable and incredible, as well as absolutely inexplicable; and it is our wisest and best course to abstain from prosecuting inquiries which can never be here, if at any time, satisfactorily answered. In fact these and such like revelations of the mysteries of God's Providence can only be properly apprehended when they are used "as lights to see by, not to look at[8]."

"The three temptations comprise every form of evil into which man can fall; and the analogy of our own trials leads us to suppose that each was again and again repeated. Nor to those who have studied the human mind and its power of rapid flight and comprehensive view will it appear at all incredible that, in the last day of the conflict, the tempter might several times urge our Lord to each of the courses mentioned by S. Matthew and S. Luke. There are mental conditions in which time compresses or expands itself, and offers a very feeble hindrance to the efforts of reason and imagination. And, for aught we know, much less than a single day might suffice to present to the mind of our Lord views and realities utterly beyond the reach of man's ordinary capacities. Both, therefore, of the narratives may be most literally and exactly true[9]."

It should be, moreover, observed that the temptations now conquered were continually recurring during the public ministry of our Lord. The first, for example, in Matt. xxvii. 40; the second in John vi. 15; vii. 3, 4; the third in Matt. xvi. 22.

It is to be observed that there is a difference in the order of

[8] Bp. Hind's "Hist. of Christianity," p. 88.

[9] Forshall on Matt. iv. 3, Gk. ed.

the three great temptations in S. Matthew and S. Luke; and it would appear probable that the former has preserved the actual order on the last day of the temptation. The language of S. Luke does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that he intended to arrange them in order of time, but rather in the opposite direction; and it is very reasonable to believe that he may have departed from the true order purposely, in order to arrange them in that form in which they would best present a climax to the minds of those Gentiles for whom he especially wrote his Gospel.

Baffled and worsted at all points, the devil withdrew from the contest, obeyed a higher power than his own, and bided his opportunity for a renewed assault. If one seeks to know what and when that opportunity or season was, let him recur to the evening and the scene when Jesus said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness. The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. "But the devil now left Him, and, as afterwards, in Gethsemane, angels came and ministered to their Lord in His now exhausted and fainting state.

The nature of the influence and the mode in, as well as the purpose for, which it operated upon the Christ are thus described by the three synoptic Evangelists.

1. S. Matthew says that, "Then was Jesus *led up of the Spirit* into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil[1]."

2. S. Mark, that "*immediately the Spirit driveth* Him into the wilderness[2]."

3. S. Luke, that He "*was led by the Spirit* into the wilderness[3]."

They all three therefore agree in this, that the motive-agency which constrained Jesus to retire into the wilderness was that of the *Spirit*. And probably we shall best interpret this of the irresistible influence which the *Divine* Spirit within Him exer-

[1] Matt. iv. 1. [2] Mark i. 12. [3] Luke iv. 1.

cised upon His *human* Spirit, dictating the preliminary course which it was necessary He should pass through in order to assure His human nature of the true character and extent of the trials which He would have to undergo, and of the *power* which resided within Him to overcome them all. The word *leading*, which in the first and third Gospels qualifies the *driving* of which S. Mark speaks, manifestly denotes the *voluntary* sequestration of Jesus; while the accurate and graphic Mark calls attention to the *vehemence* of the influence under which the Christ at this hour of His life was *driven* for the work which lay before Him.

Thus it was that, as the true Scapegoat bearing (αἴρων) upon Him the sins and iniquities of men, He was driven into the wild waste, on the Great Day of Atonement, to be confronted with the terrors of the natural and the spiritual foes of human nature.

As to the locality of the particular wilderness here alluded to we have no definite information. Common tradition points to the desert and mountain of Quarantania on the west of the river Jordan, in the immediate neighbourhood of Jericho[4]. The mention, however, of the "wild beasts" by S. Mark seems rather to point either to the southern portion of Judæa, or to the open and uninhabited country of Peræa on the other side of Jordan. Here for forty days, untended by human care, unfed by the food of man, the Saviour of the world passed through that initiatory course which was to reveal to His mind the course of His coming trials.

[4] On this tradition Robinson (Bibl. Res. in Palestine, i. 568, ed. 3) remarks that "the tradition which regards the mountain as the place of our Lord's temptation, as well as the name Quarantana, appear not to be older than the age of the Crusades." In a note he says, "The first mention of this mountain as the place of temptation seems to be by Sæwulf, about A.D. 1103." The name is variously written Quarantana, Quarantania and Quarantaria.

When Jesus had received His baptism at the hands of John, the Spirit descended visibly upon Him while He was engaged in prayer, and the voice of the Father proclaimed Him as the "Only-begotten Son." Whatever knowledge Jesus possessed of His heavenly origin ere then, it is but just to conclude that *humanly* His knowledge was not complete[5]. He gained His knowledge of the Word, and of the ordinary information of human life, by such means as we ourselves possess—by the diligent cultivation of natural faculties, and the ordinary channels of instruction. He grew in *wisdom*—that is, in the knowledge of the Scriptures and the revelation of the Divine will, as well as in *knowledge*—that is, in the training of the understanding, as He grew in stature. And it cannot surely be questioned that, in the highest and most momentous of all the subjects upon which His mind could be informed, His knowledge was gradually developed until the time when the fulness of the Godhead was manifested in Him. It must have taken place *at some time*, and what time could be more appropriate than the hour of His baptism? For then, for the first time, He was ordained to His great and mysterious functions; then first He came forth in the full character of the Saviour; then, and only then, did He begin to assume to Himself the office of the Redeemer of the World.

Is it not, then, apparent that at an epoch so momentous in the life of so great, so wondrous a Personage, the internal effect of the great declaration must have in some way corresponded to the external manifestation? Must not the Christ at that time have experienced an influence within Him so deep, so all-powerful, so constraining, as to necessitate psychologically a retirement from the world in order to allow of the due balancing of all those mighty questions which became at once sub-

[5] See Forshall, Preface to Gospel of S. Luke, pp. xxv, xxvi.

jected to His consideration—to say nothing of the natural yearning for perfect retirement and quiet, in order to admit of that calm contemplation of His great work which, without fear of presumption, we may consider was a necessity of the case?

He withdrew then into the wilderness as, before then, Moses and Elijah, the great representatives of the Law and the Prophets, had done, there to receive the final initiation into the office He was about to undertake. And there for forty days He fasted—not surely for the mere ascetic mortification of the body, for that could have no place in the exigencies of His nature. But even as Moses and Elijah had fasted before Him, so did He fast, in order to bring His human soul into fit accord with the demands of the Spirit within Him, and so to subdue His own spirit that it might be capable of those impressions from the spiritual world without, which it was necessary that He should feel and understand as realities before He was brought into open and constant contact with them.

The very fact of the forty days' fasting seems to denote of itself a supernatural support from Heaven. Such was certainly extended to the two personages above mentioned, and for purposes which had clearly reference to the great scheme of human salvation. Such support was, we may conceive, extended to Jesus also, not indeed to render Him *incapable* of being vanquished by the assaults of the enemy, but (as one would rather conceive) of bringing Him into that peculiarly spiritual condition, wherein He would be enabled to recognize the spiritual presence of the Prince of Darkness, and confront him in the very height and front of his delegated power.

It is very imaginable that the sudden and conscious possession for the first time of extraordinary gifts and miraculous powers would induce the Christ to seek, for a time, the sequestration of the desert, in order, it may be reverently supposed, to calm the strange emotions which this newly-experienced

condition might bring with it. But the chief object was, no doubt, to perfect the Communion with the Father, and so far to exclude for a time the mere demands of the bodily necessities, as to bring under the purely human body in all respects, and render it capable by abstraction of subserving the higher ends of the Spirit. So it would seem that for forty days this process of abstraction was going on, this alienation from all necessities of a mere human and bodily organization. During the whole time the assaults of Satan were directed against His powers of holy endurance; and, as we may well believe, these were perceived more and more in their intensity as the body itself became more and more subdued, and the pure Spirit was released from outer trammels to apprehend the trials and dangers which the Evil Power was permitted to bring against it.

It was while this process was going on within Him, as I conceive, that He experienced the forecast of the coming trials which, as the Representative of the Church corporate, He would be called upon to sustain on her behalf. He beheld the picture and pattern of the Church in all her phases of trial and persecution to the hour of her final triumph. And as, after the manner of Moses in the Mount, He beheld these things, so, like Elijah in the wilderness, He was "very jealous for the Lord of Hosts;" and, gathering up into His own perfect consciousness the whole picture of His own mediatorial office as it was contained in the writings of Moses and the Prophets concerning Himself, He so disciplined His own mind and spirit during this prefatial survey of His coming course, as He afterwards taught and prepared His Church during those other forty days which passed between the rising again from the grave and the ascension into Heaven.

The whole great Ordeal culminated on the fortieth day, when the Tempter, who had employed throughout the time all

the arts and wiles which seemed best suited to the gradations of the preparatory state, and found them foiled, now advanced with greater boldness to the decisive trial against the Incarnate Word of God.

And here a word of caution is necessary as to the use of the term "temptation." A man is *tempted* (according to S. James) when he is led away of his own lust and enticed. And there is this difficulty in the way of understanding the temptation of Christ, that we naturally associate the idea of temptation with that of a predisposition to the thing we are tempted to do; but this idea must manifestly be dismissed at once before we can enter upon the question of the Temptation of Christ. He was, properly speaking, not *tempted* at all. In His pure and sinless nature, conceived without sin, though *not without the liability* to be thus in His human nature tried and tempted, He could have no hereditary predisposition, *as we have*, to sin. His was a purely human, but not a fallen, nature; and the natural tendency to acts of sin must have been wanting in Him who was, in His every act and word and thought, One with the Father, even while upon this earth.

CHAPTER III.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT FOURTEEN MONTHS FROM THE MIDDLE OF NOVEMBER, A.D. 26, TO BEGINNING OF JANUARY, A.D. 28.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

SECT. 1.—Deputation of the Sanhedrim to John the Baptist—Visit of Jesus to John—First call of Andrew, Simon, Philip, and Nathanael—The marriage at Cana.

SECT. 2.—Transactions at the FIRST PASSOVER—Visit of Nicodemus to Jesus—Synchronical baptisms of John and Jesus in Judæa—Second awakening of the Baptist's voice and his departure for the Perichorus of Jordan—His imprisonment by Herod Antipas. (Appendix on Chronology of S. John iv. 1—3).

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. John i. 19; iii. 36.
S. Luke iii. 1—20.

SECTION I.

DURING the forty days of Jesus' stay in the wilderness, the Baptist continued to exercise his functions upon the eastern or left bank of the Jordan, in the locality of Bethabara in Peræa. It was the place beyond all others adapted for his special purpose in the infancy of his preaching, where all the caravans to and from the northern district of Galilee would halt before the passage of the ford, and at a time when his reputation as the stern preacher of morality had not yet excited the animosity of the Pharisees or of Herod.

Six months, however, had now elapsed since the tones of the second Elijah had first swept over the hearts of degenerate

Israel; and the increasing reports of the progress of his mission now began to attract the serious attention of the Pharisaic party at head-quarters. The suddenness of the Prophet's appearance, the singularity of his mode of life, his austere manners, the peculiarity of his dress, the very monotony of his one unvarying cry, coupled with the powerful influence which he had unquestionably begun to exercise over the minds of his countrymen, roused at once the curiosity and the interest of the leaders of religious opinion in the Holy City itself. A meeting of the Supreme Council the Sanhedrim was accordingly held; at which it would seem that the question was discussed whether it might not be even the expected Messiah Himself who had thus suddenly presented Himself before the people at this period of general expectation and excitement.

The Sanhedrim, it must be remembered, were the keepers of the national conscience. It was their duty to examine into all apparent innovations in doctrine and practice, and to test all pretensions of professing prophets and preachers. It was therefore in no captious spirit, nor with any desire to disprove the pretensions of John, that they resolved upon sending a deputation to inquire into his conduct, and to request him to give some account of himself to them in their official capacity. "The Jews" (says Hengstenberg, on S. John, i. 60) "are *here* represented by the highest national court, the Chief Council. It cannot be doubted that by the embassy to the Baptist, with which the message to Christ corresponds as to form, they complied with the duty and obligation of their office." And to this the Lord Himself testifies in verses 33—35. Jerusalem, i. e. the Sanhedrim which sat there, was, as the same writer observes, "the religious centre, the high watch-tower, from which all phenomena of religious life in the country were beheld and watched over." The very fact that they were not only justified in acting as they did, but that they would have been neglecting a solemn

duty had they failed to do so, ought of itself to be a sufficient answer to all strictures upon the supposed malevolence of their motives. But there is not wanting the very highest testimony to the fact that they were in the first instance really animated by the hope that their surmises might prove to be true, and that in John they might behold, if not the Messiah Himself, at all events either the resuscitated Elijah or, possibly, the great Prophet of the Captivity, Jeremiah. The truth was that public expectation was at this time much excited. Scarcely a generation had passed away since the Death of Herod the Great, and there must have been many who remembered the visit of the Magians, and the strange tumult of hope and anxiety which had then thrilled through the heart of the city at the idea of the birth of a true King of the Jews. The voice of Prophecy had been silent in Israel for more than 500 years; and it would not have been in the nature of things that the tidings of the sudden rise, in the very midst of themselves, of one recalling in many characteristics the traditional appearance of one of the very greatest of the Jewish Prophets, should not have created a great and lively interest amongst the rulers of the holy people.

In his glory and renown the whole nation would partake, and in his light they were consequently willing for a season to rejoice. But the season was brief! The message of the Baptist was distasteful to a depraved and degenerate priesthood; and the flame of national and religious fervour that had begun to flicker up in the hearts of Pharisee and Sadducee soon wavered, sank, and finally died out before the stern malediction of the preacher of the wilderness. His ministry, however, was as yet young, and was exercised not within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim but in the dominion of Herod Antipas. It was still novel to a generation to whom the office of a Prophet was known only from the tradition of their

canonical Books of Scripture; and the mission of the Council was undoubtedly despatched for the purpose of arriving at some knowledge of the facts, and to ascertain from the statements of the preacher himself what authority he professed for his work, and in what character he claimed to minister as a "Baptist" among the people. That the advent of the Messiah would be either heralded or signalized by a general lustration of the people had long been an accepted article of belief among the expositors of the Jewish Scriptures[1]. The appearance of the Baptist, therefore, inevitably excited much discussion in the Council, as it could not be readily imagined that so striking a work would be undertaken by any one who could not show Divine warranty for his actions.

BETHABARA. NOVEMBER 20.

It was apparently on the very day on which the Messiah was engaged in the deadly struggle with the powers of evil in the wilderness of Judæa that the deputation of the Council arrived at the ford of Jordan, and proceeded to institute their inquiries of John the son of Zacharias. The deputation is described by the Evangelist S. John as consisting of both Priests and *Levites*. By these latter are very possibly meant those who, from their office of transcribing copies of the law, are generally termed *Scribes*. In the Old Testament, however, the Levites[2] are expressly so mentioned by name, as having the

[1] The chief passage upon which this expectation was founded is Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, supported by Ps. li. 1, 2; Num. xix. 20.

[2] "A mission of priests and Levites distinct from them occurs also in 2 Chron. xvii. 7—9. Jehoshaphat, in the third year of his reign, sends out five princes with nine Levites and two priests, who were to visit all the cities of Judah, 'and had the book of the law of the Lord with them,' out of which they were to instruct the Lord's people. The Levites in this mission taught no less than the priests. There are also not traces wanting elsewhere, that the office assigned in Deut. xxxiii. 10 to the tribe of Levi, of teaching the people the judgments of the Lord, was realized not only by

office of instructing the people. On an occasion like the present, when the object was to ascertain that the provisions of the law had not been infringed, or the province of authorized teachers presumptuously invaded or assumed, it was natural that the deputation should consist of members of that party whose zeal for the literal exactness of the Law and Ritual was most conspicuous, and their acquaintance with its details most exact. Accordingly S. John remarks that "they which were sent were of the Pharisees[3]."

The Baptist was still in the active discharge of his ministrations when the deputation arrived. "*Who art thou?*" they asked, not in terms of reproof or disrespect, but simply desiring to receive the Baptist's own account of himself, for the purpose of testing it by the words and declarations of the Old Testament Scriptures. It is perhaps to be inferred from the reply of John himself that there was even something of deference in the manner and tone of the deputation, suggestive of a willingness to believe in him as the coming Messiah, should his own assurance chime in with popular anxiety, and his views fall in with the passionate longings of the higher classes for a leader who would deliver them from the bondage of the foreigner[4]. The language of the Evangelist, in recording the

the priests, but also by the common Levites, who, as it seems, were on this very account distributed over the whole country that they might be able to fulfil this office."—Hengstenberg, on St. John, i. 61.

"The instruction given to the children of Israel by the Levites consisted in explaining the law in doubtful cases, solving difficulties which might occur in the dealings between man and man, and judging in controversies. Whenever, then, an Israelite had any doubt in his mind respecting the law, or any controversy with his neighbour, it was his duty to seek the Levite." —Bernard's Tr. of Vitringa, p. 245, App.

[3] John i. 24.

[4] Hengstenberg, referring to ver. 33—35, says, "The Chief Council at that time regarded the appearance of the Baptist with pleasure. The higher the dignity he ascribed to himself the dearer was he to them" (i. 60). Ebrard loses sight of the true meaning when he says that the object of the deputa-

denial of the Messiahship by the Baptist, also supports this view; for it is evidently made a point of worthy confession on his part that "he confessed and denied not, but confessed[5]" that he was not, as they imagined, the Christ. To the further questions whether he were Elias, or "that Prophet" (of whom Moses had foretold), he gave equally short and categorical replies, contenting himself with a simple denial of the characters they sought to fasten upon him. With these three questions the catechism of the Sanhedrim was exhausted. There was no other character whom their Scriptures taught them to expect, and hence the position taken up by John appeared to them both anomalous and indefensible. "Why baptizest thou, then," was the very natural demand, "if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet?" They had indeed put one other pertinent question to him, but the answer was to their prejudices incomprehensible. "Who art thou?" they asked, "that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?" His answer was: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias[6]."

The answers of John are deserving of marked attention, because they thus early indicate the condition of the Jewish mind, and the difficulties which it placed in the way of the acceptance of the Messiah in the person of Jesus. That John was truly the Prophet Elias which was to come, the Messenger of the Covenant of whom Malachi spake, needs no re-assertion; and it seems strange that John should have so peremptorily refused the title. But his refusal shows distinctly that he *was a*

tion was that of "finding some charge against this inconvenient man, who showed every sign of undermining the influence of the priests over the people, and in the hope of undoing his work with a good grace" (p. 208). It was too early as yet for the Pharisees to have made up their minds upon the subject. Ebrard's words apply really to twelve months later.

[5] John i. 20. [6] John i. 22–35.

prophet, one whose insight into men and things was above that of ordinary men. He looked through mere words and names into things and verities, and he knew what was the true meaning of the question put to him—the real spirit which underlay all the false views and assumptions of the blinded teachers of Israel. It was that very spirit of literalness—which looked only at the letter not at the spirit of things, which judged according to appearances, and therefore not righteous judgment—which it was his especial work and mission to counteract, before the eye, cleared of the beam which obscured it, could see clearly the light that was about to shine in the world. The Gospel rested upon *signs*, by the proper consideration of which a pious and a candid mind could not fail to see the truth they signified. These signs showed both what was the true meaning of the Scriptures upon which the Jew relied, and pointed to the effect which in all propriety they ought to have upon his mind. It was in the spirit of that thorough literalness which looked for human pomp and splendour in the advent of their King, that they desired to know of John whether he were that Elijah, of whom the writer of the Book of Kings had testified, raised again to life, in accordance with the half-heathen notions which the times of the Babylonish Captivity had engendered in the Jewish mind. To this view of himself the Baptist had but a negative to give, as he had also to the kindred error which separated the Prophet of whom Moses spoke[7] from the Messiah of the New Covenant, and identified him with some resuscitated Jeremiah of bygone days and states of things. The account which he *did give* of himself was enough to have led the minds of his questioners into a truer channel; and if they would have received him in the true character which he *did claim*, they

[7] In Acts iii. 22 the identity of "that Prophet" with Jesus is established. See also vii. 37.

would have seen clearly, as Jesus afterwards declared, that he was the "Elias which was for to come[8]." It is, moreover, worthy of observation that the Prophet who speaks beforehand of the coming of John describes him not simply as "Elijah," but as "Elijah *the Prophet*." In other words, he directs attention to the *office, not to the individual.* The resemblance in dress and mode of living between the two was designed first to call attention, as by signs, to John's person and work; and when attention was thus aroused in candid minds, the perception of the truth would naturally and necessarily follow.

The answer of John to the difficulty of the deputation was little likely to convey any satisfactory information to their minds. He disparages his own work before that of One who, as he tells them, is in their very midst; One indeed of themselves, yet in comparison with whom he himself is but as a slave unworthy to execute a slave's office to so great a Master in untying the very clasp of His sandals. He intimates that the time is not yet come, nor the true work yet entered upon, which should stir the very heart of all Israel; that, compared with that, his own work is but poor and limited in power; and he bids them look forward to what may well arouse their liveliest, deepest attention in the person of One who, although in the time of this world later in appearance than himself, is yet inconceivably immeasurably his superior, inasmuch as "He was[9]" before him. From the actual language used by the Baptist it would seem that he intimated in this his answer some allusion to the eternal existence of the Christ.

With this answer of the Baptist the deputation of the Sanhedrim seem to have taken their leave. No further conversation, at least, or event is recorded by the Evangelist as belonging to this particular day.

[8] Matt. xi. 14.

[9] See Exod. iii. 14.

BETHABARA. NOVEMBER 21.

The great temptation was now over, and Jesus returned from the wilderness. The future course of His Church lay open before Him, with all its trials and temptations set before His inner vision; His human soul, confirmed and strengthened by the power of the Spirit, discerning in the clear light of His perfect consciousness all the needs of men—their difficulties, their dangers, their infirmities all brought into immediate contact with a soul wholly devoid of sin, and a heart perfectly capable of comprehending all the wants and weaknesses of the nature He had taken upon Himself[1].

It appears that immediately upon His return Jesus sought the Baptist in the place where, six weeks before, He had left him after His own baptism. What the purport of His visit was we may perhaps, without irreverence, conjecture. Greatest of all woman-born, a Prophet, "yea, and more than a Prophet," His own near kinsman, and immediate Precursor in the Divine

[1] It is surprising that the clear intellect and sound judgment of Hengstenberg should in this instance be misled as to the plain and incontrovertible meaning of Scripture. His error is that of assuming that John i. 29 is parallel with Matt. iii. 13. His words upon the subject are: "When Jesus left Capernaum and went to Jerusalem the temptation by Satan had not yet taken place. From the first three Gospels only thus much is established: that it must have taken place after the baptism of Jesus, and before the return of Jesus to Galilee, after the incarceration of the Baptist (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14). Since the wilderness cannot be sought elsewhere than in Judæa, and since, between the baptism of Jesus and the first return to Galilee, in John, there is no room for the temptation, we shall have to place it in the time when, after His first Passover, and after the solemn entrance on His Office in the temple connected with it, Jesus went with His disciples into the land of Judæa, and there He tarried with them, and baptized (John iii. 22)".—Hengstenberg, S. John, vol. i. 130, 131.

He considers that the statement of S. Mark i. 12 does not require to be construed with such strict exactness. But with S. Matthew's Gospel before us, it is impossible not to see that the somewhat vague "*then*" of the latter is really defined and explained by the "*immediately*" of S. Mark. vas doubtless the very same day.

work of the Kingdom of God, the chosen instrument at whose hands He had Himself received the anointing to the office of High Priest of the new people of God—can it be matter of doubt that to John the Baptist, first and foremost of men, the Redeemer communicated the facts and the issue of the Great Temptation of the Wilderness? So much, His tender love to man, His recognition of the claims of kindred, and especially the relation in which John of all living persons stood to Himself in the work of redemption, lead us to conclude may have been the purpose of Christ's voluntary interview with the Baptist on this occasion. John could not have been an ignorant witness of that mighty spiritual throe which constrained the newly-baptized Jesus to seek the retirement and solitude of the rude and inhospitable wilderness. He had beheld the descent of the Spirit from Heaven with the rapture of the prophetic gaze, he had contemplated the inauguration of the Temple of God—should it be withheld from him that the Son of God had triumphed over the wiles which the Tempter had spread in the way of His earliest movements, and that thenceforth the power of Satan was broken, and his kingdom taken from his rule?

On perceiving the returning form of Jesus, John exclaimed to those around him, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away[2] (beareth) the sins of the world!" Then, recalling the attention of his hearers to the statement which he made the day before to the deputation of the Sanhedrim respecting Jesus, he told them that this was the Person of whom he declared that One coming after him was preferred to a higher "status" than his own, because of His eternal pre-existence.

[2] Much dispute, as is well known, has existed as to the true meaning of αἴρων in this passage. It will be sufficient here to refer the reader to Wordsworth's Gk. T., on John i. 29, where the whole question is discussed. The view here taken is important, as bearing upon the chronology adopted regarding the Day of Atonement. See also above, p. 34, and Hengst. i. 77.

The Baptist went on to declare that, previously to the baptism of Jesus, he had not known *who* He really was. The sign given to John was the descent of the Holy Spirit from heaven in the form of a *Dove*[3], which should abide upon the head of the true Son of God. Now as the descent of the Spirit did not take place until after the baptism had been completed, how could John say with truth other than what he did say, viz. that when Jesus came to him at first he did not know Him?

John, it is clear, *did not know Him*, and he did not hesitate, to his own worldly disparagement in the eyes of his followers, to say so. But he bore the great testimony which it was his office and duty to bear, that he saw the promised sign, and in accordance with it, vouched that Jesus was the SON OF GOD.

The words in John i. 32—34 are complementary of those in verses 29—31.

BETHABARA. NOVEMBER 22.

The next day again John was at his usual spot, but on this occasion he was not employed in the work of his ministration. He "stood, and two of his disciples" with him. His attitude was that of reverent expectation, of a good steward waiting for the coming of his Lord. It was morning, before the full heat of noonday had set in, though the fierce heats of summer were now beginning to give way before the setting in of the rainy season. His expectation was not disappointed. Very possibly the Voice which governed his prophetic movements had assured him of the coming presence of his Master. Jesus presently came in sight, not making, as before, for the spot where John was standing, but walking alone. Fixing his earnest gaze upon the Redeemer, John exclaimed, more as it should seem in rapt commune with his own spirit than as addressing the bystanders, "Behold the Lamb of God[4]!" The two disciples

[3] John i. 32, 33.

[4] John i. 36.

who heard the exclamation of their master immediately quitted the side of John, and at some little distance reverently followed the footsteps of Jesus. As they followed, Jesus turned and, observing them, inquired what they sought. They answered that they desired to know where He dwelt, in order, no doubt, that they might present themselves thereafter for instruction at His hands. The answer was, "Come and see." With the exception of the replies to the Tempter in the wilderness, these are the first words recorded of Jesus since the day when His parents sought Him sorrowing in the temple eighteen years before.

The narrative here is evidently so greatly condensed that it is necessary to believe in some break to the continuous stay which the two disciples made with Jesus on that day. Probably after remaining with Him for some time, and having convinced their minds of the truth, they obtained from Him permission to go in quest of their own companions, for whom they desired participation in the great and glorious discovery they had made. One of the two who had followed Jesus home was Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter; the other (who is not named) could be no other than John himself, the Evangelist, who describes so minutely the diary of these great seven days[5]. The two went apparently together in search of Peter, but the writer is careful to mention that it was *Andrew* who first lit upon his brother, and enjoyed the privilege of first declaring his belief that they had found the Messias. Simon, it appears, at once relinquished whatever business he might have had in hand at the moment, and accompanied his guides to the presence of Jesus. On his introduction to his future Master, Jesus fixed His eyes upon the man whose whole

[5] Hengstenberg c
defines these seven
tions of *four* and *th*

the emphatic way in which S. John
he entire hebdomad into two por-
(i. 116).

character and future life lay in the moment open before His gaze, and said, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona: thou shalt be called CEPHAS (which is by interpretation, *a Stone*").

The brother of Andrew had evidently been introduced to Jesus by name as Simon Bar-Jona; and the name by which He now declared he should be called, in allusion to qualities which yet remained to be developed, was not now given to him by Jesus, but merely stated as appropriate to his character. The name Peter (Heb. Cephas) was not actually given until wo years and a half afterwards [6].

The first day, therefore, after the return from the Great Probation bore fruits in the adhesion of *three* who, having been prepared by the premonitory preaching of John, were ready to believe in Jesus as the Christ from the testimony they had heard borne regarding him.

The minuteness with which the words of John and the times of these occurrences are specified leaves no doubt in the mind of impartial readers that the narrative of these events comes at first hand from an eye-witness of the scenes here described.

BETHABARA. NOVEMBER 23.

The following day, the Evangelist is careful to tell us, was the *fourth* in regular succession since the return of Jesus from the wilderness. He now intended returning into Galilee, and, as He foresaw the beginning of His miraculous powers must be made there, it was His will to take with Him those who should be competent witnesses of His actions. The two disciples of John who had already become convinced, first by the testimony of their own master, and afterwards by their own personal interview with Jesus, that He was undoubtedly the Messiah,

[6] Viz. at Cæsarea Philippi, on the occasion of his sole declaration of the Divinity of Jesus. See below, in loco.

had now, together with Simon, attached themselves temporarily[7] to His service, and prepared to accompany Him into the district which was the common home of all. The town of which Andrew and Peter were natives was Bethsaida of Galilee, situated upon the north-western shore of the Lake of Tiberias, in the immediate neighbourhood of the flourishing city of Capernaum. There was in the neighbourhood of Bethabara, at this time, at least one more native of this fishing-village, named Philip. Him the Lord Jesus willed to join the little party which He intended to take with Him into Galilee, and

[7] There is nothing more important in order to a right understanding of the harmony of the Gospels than to gain clear notions of the different calls of the Apostles, and the nature of those calls. There was not *one* call, but several, as will be observed from the following excellent remarks :—

"Peter and his companions were encouraged on several occasions to attach themselves to our Lord's Person and Ministry.

"1. When (John i. 35) they were with the Baptist. Induced to return with our Lord into Galilee, they did not, as it seems, quit Him until after His second visit to Cana.

"2. When (Matt. iv. 19) they received a positive command to be His followers, and accompanied Him on His ensuing circuit of Galilee.

"3. When (Luke v. 1), having come back to Capernaum, and taken to their occupation as fishermen, they were constrained by a miracle to give it up entirely and to become constant attendants on our Lord's ministrations.

"4. When (Luke vi. 12) they were ordained Apostles, not only to be always with our Lord, but to minister in His Gospel both by word and work."—Forshall (first 12 cc. of S. Matthew's Gospel), on iv. 18.

"Wieseler rightly distinguishes (1) between their preliminary call, implying discipleship in general and adoption of His cause, but without any special obligation, John i. 35, &c. ; (2) their selection as continuous and regular followers of the Lord, Matt. iv. 18, &c. (also Luke v. 4) ; and (3) the choice of twelve to be apostles, Matt. x. 24. These stages may also be arranged as follows :—1. Reception as disciples in the most general sense (catechumens) ; 2. Selection for service, by continuous following of the Lord (Evangelists) ; 3. Selection to be the representatives of the Lord, with bestowal of the power to work miracles (Apostles). The latter distinction was, however, bestowed upon the Apostles with certain conditions and limitations, until after the outpouring of the Holy Ghost."—Lange, on S. Matt., vol. i. p. 174.

went apparently in person this fourth morning to bid him join His company.

There remains yet but one of these early companions of Jesus to be noticed; and that is Nathanael the friend of Philip, the Israelite in whom Jesus Himself testified that "there was no guile." It was he of whom Philip, in the first access of his own conviction, went in search with the announcement that in Jesus of Nazareth had been found, by certain notes and marks of identification, the long-expected Messiah. The manner in which the natural incredulity of the well-informed Israelite was dissipated in a moment by the address of Jesus is a signal proof that, where there was a readiness to weigh aright the prophetic notes, the character of Jesus was sufficient to create conviction. Nathanael stumbled originally upon Nazareth; but he was open to admit the proofs of identification in the nature of the Being before him; and Nazareth was speedily forgotten in Bethlehem.

Either that evening or the following morning the little company started, by way of Peræa, across the usual ford of Succoth into Galilee. The party now consisted of Andrew and his brother Simon, John the second son of Zebedee, Philip, and Nathanael, afterwards better known under his patronymic of Bartholomew, or the son of Tholmai. These all were now temporarily attached to the person of Jesus, and seem to have continued with Him in the voluntary capacity of attendants for the next twelve or fourteen months.

They arrived at Cana, a small town of Galilee, towards evening on the third day after their departure from the neighbourhood of Bethabara. From the circumstance that Nathanael himself was a native, or at least a resident, of this town, it is probable that Jesus and His attendants had accepted the proffered hospitality of this follower's home, and would have temporarily taken up their abode there, but for the

circumstance which S. John proceeds immediately to relate.

CANA (KANA EL JELIL). NOVEMBER 26.

There was a marriage celebration on this very evening in the town; and from various circumstances it appears probable that it was the marriage of the nearest female relative of Mary. His mother was already in the house, where, from the subsequent narrative, she appears to have undertaken in a measure the management of the household duties on behalf of the newly-wedded pair. The arrival of Jesus with His followers in the village speedily became known; and with the ready hospitality of the Jewish character they were at once invited to the wedding banquet. It is well known that no expense was spared on these occasions by the Jews. The most lavish liberality was exercised in doing honour to the marriage rejoicings, and it was held a disgrace for any thing like niggardness or parsimony to appear. The present was no exception to the general rule in such matters, but the household was not one of the wealthier class, and the unexpected arrival of six new guests may readily be supposed to have occasioned some little embarrassment in a family of moderate pretensions. It may not be questioned that, among the many reasons for which the Lord Jesus designed to render this occasion memorable by the beginning of miracles, that of the bestowal of His bounty was not omitted in the Divine consideration.

Jesus had accepted the hospitality, *for Himself and His five disciples*, of the house of a person evidently not in affluent circumstances; and He seems to have designed in the number of the water-pots to have regard to the number of those who had partaken of the hospitality. And His bounty is to be looked upon as the dowry which the Prince of Israel deigned to bestow upon those whom He deemed worthy of His regard.

SECTION II.

CAPERNAUM (TEL-HUM). MARCH 21, A.D. 27.

FROM the evening of the marriage at Cana we hear no more of the movements of Jesus until we find Him (as mentioned in the close of the last chapter) in company with His family and disciples at Capernaum. There is, therefore, a period of five months entirely unaccounted for by the Evangelists. It is probable that, during this time, Jesus abode in His former dwelling at Nazareth, waiting until the arrival of the Feast of Passover should afford the necessary opportunity for publicly inaugurating His Divine mission in Jerusalem.

The formula of time by which S. John introduces the arrival of Jesus in Capernaum is "after this;" a mode of expression by which this Evangelist always indicates a lapse of time. From the mention made of the company who were assembled together with Him, and the shortness of the stay which they made in Capernaum, it seems clear that they were on their way to the Feast of Passover; and the object of their going to Capernaum seems to have been to pass a few days in the house of John[8]. As the Passover fell in this year on the 9th

[8] "'After this He went down to Capernaum, He, and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples; and they continued there not many days.' From the connexion with the following verse we perceive that Capernaum was visited on the journey to the feast at Jerusalem. To such an occasion we are led also by the dissimilarity of the companions, the brothers of Jesus not having yet believed on Him. John does not furnish a complete narrative."—Hengstenberg, on S. John, vol. i. p. 129.

"The settling of Jesus in Capernaum can only have taken place after the journey to Galilee, of which we have an account in iv. 43. That Jesus had been there transiently, before His settling there, is testified by Luke iv. 23, according to which He performed miracles there on this transient visit. Why is this short stay in Capernaum on the journey to the feast mentioned

of April, they must have quitted the city on the 1st of that month, so as to arrive in Jerusalem, as was customary, four days before the 14th of Nisan. Allowing a stay of ten days (which seems about the time indicated by the expression of S. John) in Capernaum, the date of the arrival would be about the 21st of March, in the year A.D 27.

In considering the visits of Jesus to the Passover, it must be borne in mind distinctly that He who was above the Law descended to the requirements of the Law for the sake not of Himself, but of others. "The Son of Man [who was] Lord also of the Sabbath" was not bound by the necessity of human ordinances, even when they had been, as in the case of the Levitical Law, enacted or sanctioned by Himself. It became Him, however, for the sake of others, "to fulfil all righteousness" by submitting to its requirements, in order to show that the Law was not contrary to the Gospel. Still He did not apparently attend all the feasts. The third Passover, for instance, He certainly spent in Galilee[9]. The main object of His visits was undoubtedly to teach the people, for which object the assemblages in the temple at that period were peculiarly favourable. During the festival, He armed

when John does not speak of any remarkable event there? It seems that the reason was a personal one,—that John was from Capernaum, and that Jesus put up at the house of his father. The residence of John's father, Zebedee, is nowhere expressly noticed. But it is in favour of Capernaum, that the nearest friends of John, his and his brother's partners (Luke v. 10), Peter and Andrew, were of Bethsaida, which, as it seems, was the fishing suburb of Capernaum, or, at all events, in its immediate vicinity. The connexion of Bethsaida and Capernaum is evident from John i. 45, compared with Luke iv. 38, Mark i. 29,—passages which can be brought into harmony only on the supposition that Bethsaida formed a part of Capernaum, with which also the name very well agrees."—Hengstenberg, on S. John, vol. i. p. 130.

[9] Indeed, at this period there was so much laxity in the observance of the ordinances of the Book of Leviticus, that Josephus states that the Passover was the only one of the feasts which was observed by all the people.

Himself with a scourge of small cords, taken doubtless from some of the sellers in the temple[1], and proceeded by a most significant act to arouse the attention of the people to the profanation which they had so long tolerated. The outer court of the temple was appropriated to the worship of the *Gentiles*, who, upon conformity to certain requisitions of the Law, were permitted to join in the worship of the Jews. Under no circumstances, however, could the Jew be content to look upon a Gentile with any other feelings than those of disdain and repugnance; and they on every occasion displayed the contempt they felt for all worshippers who were not lineally born descendants of Abraham. The most offensive way in which they evinced their scorn and contempt was afforded by the necessity of a sufficient market for the animals and birds[2] used in sacrificial offerings being kept in the neighbourhood of the temple. In the time of Jesus these animals were introduced into this very outer court itself, which had been solemnly set aside for the occupation of the Gentile worshippers, the priests thus declaring by their acts that they regarded them as unclean.

JERUSALEM—THE TEMPLE. APRIL 10.

The court was therefore at this time thronged with stalls of sheep and oxen, and cages full of doves; while, inasmuch as no foreign coin was admissible in the temple tax or offerings, and all coins must be of the legal weight, tables of money-changers were set up in the same spot, where constant extortion was practised, the whole place assuming thus the aspect, and presenting the objectionable features, of a common market in a hallowed precinct.

[1] See Hengstenberg, i. 141.
[2] See Wordsworth, on S. John, ii. 14.

Armed with His scourge of cords, Jesus entered the profaned spot. The scourge was *the emblem of the power* He wielded, not *the instrument* of His indignation. The look which could cast down to the ground a band of Roman troops had in it a power which needed no external weapon for its instrument. Entering the place thus desecrated by the rapacity and jealousy of the Priests, He raised aloft the scourge, and commanded the immediate evacuation of the spot by those who polluted it with their traffic. The majesty of His glance and voice, the holy indignation animating a countenance that revealed the Divinity within, at once terrified and overawed the crowd. Conscience-stricken and alarmed, they offered no resistance, ventured no remonstrance, when the warning words fell upon their ears, "Take these things hence[3]: make not My Father's House an house of merchandise[4]." In haste to escape from the awful front of the avenging Son, the tables of the unholy plunderers of God's people were overthrown; and even the brute-beasts recognized their Creator's voice, and departed from the presence of the Christ[5]. The significance of the marvellous act, and the demeanour of their Master, together brought to the mind of the disciples that passage in the Messianic Psalm of David, "The zeal of Thine House hath eaten me up[6]."

The Pharisees who stood by and had witnessed this unexpected scene now broke silence, and demanded of Jesus *what sign* He showed of any commission to do such things as He had just taken upon Himself to do. "Destroy this temple," replied Jesus, "and in three days I will raise it up." Whether in real or affected ignorance of His meaning, the Jews reminded

[3] "The scourge of small cords was only a symbolical expression of 'Take these things hence,' though He doubtless expressed it verbally also."—Hengstenberg, i. 142.

[4] John ii. 16. [5] See the Greek Test. in John ii. 15.

[6] Ps. lxix. 9. See also Ps. cxix. 139.—On the subject of the two purifications see Hengstenberg's Christology, iv. 247.

Him that the temple had been already forty and six years[7] in process of construction, and derided the answer He gave as incomprehensible.

The Evangelist is here careful to say that Jesus had spoken figuratively of His own body as the Temple of God; and that, although the disciples had not discerned His meaning at the time, yet after His resurrection the meaning became apparent to their minds, and the relation of the prophecy to the event was made clear to their understanding. By the figure which Jesus used it must be carefully noted that the Jews might have understood (and perhaps did in some way divine) that He claimed to be the true Messiah; but the allusion to the destruction and rebuilding of the temple very naturally baffled their comprehension. His conduct and preaching had not as yet given rise to that excitement which soon afterwards broke out into open hostility. As in the case of John, they would have readily accepted Jesus, had He satisfied their notions of the personage they expected, or had He not so vehemently denounced them before the people. They certainly did look upon the Messiah as in some sense the *living Temple of God;* but the allusion to their own act of destruction was not as yet intelligible, while that to His own resurrection was, as we know, far above the comprehension of any.

"We shall labour in vain," says Hengstenberg, "in the solu-

[7] See above, p. 8.—It seems impossible to arrive at any chronological date from this statement. Josephus speaks of the fifteenth year of Herod as that in which the restoration of the temple was undertaken. This would bring us to the year A.U.C. 731-2, reckoned from the period of the death of Antigonus. Adding to this date 46 years, we reach A.U.C. 777, three years too early for the true year. Nor does Wieseler (p. 152) solve the difficulty. He considers that Josephus really wrote the *eighteenth year*, and thus brings it down to A.U.C. 781, one year, that is, too late. The truth probably is that the Jews reckoned from some definite point other than that which Josephus took as the date of commencement. It is not difficult to see that such might easily be the case.

tion of this sacred enigma, which the Saviour here presents before the Jews, so long as we fail to recognize the essential identity of the Temple, the appearance of Christ in the flesh, and the Church of the New Testament. The meaning was there thus determined: 'If you shall once (that which ye *will* do, ye *shall* do) destroy the Temple of My Body, and in and with it this outward temple, the symbol and pledge of the Kingdom of God among you, then will I in three days raise up again the Temple of My Body, and in, and with, it the essence of the outward temple, the Kingdom of God[8].'"

It appears that during the festival Jesus wrought many miracles in Jerusalem[9], which had the effect of attracting many persons to believe in His name; but the Lord would not place any trust in them, nor call any to be His disciples, because He knew the hearts of all men, and was aware that of those who there professed belief many would ere long fall away again from the truth.

Amongst the Pharisees who were close and attentive observers of all that Jesus did was one named Nicodemus, a member of the Supreme Council, and a man of candid mind, though (as the history shows) deficient in moral courage. The acts he witnessed had excited his deepest interest, and rendered him anxious to arrive at some definite conclusion regarding the real character of Jesus. The suspicious temper of the Pharisees had, however, been already aroused; and it was on all accounts desirable to proceed with caution. He accordingly resolved upon visiting Jesus by night.

From the minute account which John has preserved of the conversation which ensued, it is more than probable that the five disciples, of whom we have already had intimation, were present. On this first visit, especially after the miracle at Cana, they would naturally desire to be with Him as much as

[8] On S. John, vol. i. p. 145. [9] John iv. 45.

possible, and it would be as much for their benefit, as for that of His visitor, that Jesus would address His observations.

JERUSALEM—LODGINGS OF JESUS. NIGHT OF APRIL 10.

Nicodemus hesitatingly introduced the subject of his visit by stating that the body to which he belonged were convinced that Jesus was a teacher come from God, by the evidence of the miracles which He had wrought amongst them. He also addressed the Lord as "Rabbi," a title of honour and respect among the Jews, and one by which Jesus, as Messiah, was pleased on many occasions to be known.

It is scarcely within the province of this work to analyse the nature of the conversation which followed. Its purport on the part of Jesus was to awaken within the mind of His visitor a sense of the spiritual nature of true religion, which had been in great measure lost in the ritualistic ceremonies of the Jewish Law, and to establish the correlative of the preliminary preaching of John, that the death of the old being of man, and a spiritual resurrection of the heart through the Spirit, are indispensable to the true believer. That this interview determined the choice of Nicodemus, and riveted for ever his convictions in the fact of the revelation of God in Christ, there can be no doubt. The influence of the party of antagonism in the Sanhedrim was, however, yet too strong for the moral courage of the Jewish doctor. It is perhaps this timidity of character (overcome apparently only upon one striking occasion before the death of Christ) which has caused that no further record of his progress in the faith has been made.

With the conversation above recorded, the Evangelist John brings to a conclusion the Paschal work of Jesus, so far as it was his business to record it. The next point at which he continues the history is introduced by the formula already noticed (μετὰ ταῦτα), by which an interval of indefinite length

is intimated as being passed over without notice. It is not impossible that even a journey to the North and back, including a stay probably of no great duration in Nazareth or Capernaum, may be included in this interval.

At some time certainly during the spring or summer of this year, A.D 27, the Passover being concluded on April 16, Jesus, accompanied by His five disciples, "came into the land of Judæa[1]; and there He tarried with His disciples, and baptized." By the expression "tarried" is intimated a stay of some considerable time. If, then, we knew whence to date this movement of Jesus, we could define the period of His abode in Judæa. It is certain that He did not quit the new scene of His labours until at least the end of December in this year.

What the exact place was which Jesus chose for the scene of His baptism we do not know. The language of the Evangelist John intimates that it was not far from the locality where the Baptist at this period was employed in his own especial and similar work[2]. This spot is stated to have been "Ænon near to Salim," and the reason assigned is, that there were many "springs of water" there. It was, therefore, at some distance from the river Jordan; which would otherwise have been the natural place of his baptism. Wieseler concludes from the language of S. John that Jesus was in the selfsame locality with the Baptist. But the text does not support such a conclusion; it rather indicates that they were *not* in the same

[1] This expression of the Evangelist is not without its value in determining the meaning of the expression in S. John iv. 43. It seems to show that the district of a country was regarded in a different light from the town, so that a person leaving London, for instance, and going into any rural hamlet in the same county, would be said to be *going into Middlesex*, although the metropolis itself is there situated.

[2] "After the feast of the Passover Jesus still remained in Judæa, and let his disciples baptize (John iv. 2), thus continuing, like John, to summon those who heard to give the old life up to death, and to commence a new life."—Ebrard, Gospel History, p. 223.

place, though probably (from other circumstances) at no great distance from each other. Moreover, it is contrary to all the *à priori* conception of the probabilities of the case, as well as to the historical proprieties of their respective offices, that the Forerunner and the Messiah should be at work together in the selfsame place. There must have been in such case confusion in the minds of the disciples of each, to say nothing of the multitudes who resorted to either for their ministry.

JUDÆA—ÆNON, NEAR SALIM. SUMMER OF A.D. 27.

The place where John was baptizing was, according to S. John, "Ænon near to Salim," because, as has been said, "there was much water," or rather, *many springs* there [3]. Where this spot was has been the subject of much difference of opinion. It was certainly not near the Jordan, or the historian would not have noticed the fact of the ὕδατα πόλλα there. Neither was it in Samaria, as Dean Stanley [4], following some German writers, has supposed. For John could have had nothing to do in Samaria any more than Jesus Himself. Nor would there have been that controversy with *the Jew*, as Wieseler has pointed out, mentioned in iii. 25, for a Jew would have nothing to do in Samaria. That it was *somewhere in Judæa* is plain from the words of S. John; and therefore all that can be done is to identify it, if possible, with some of the names known to have been those of places in that country. It may be a help towards a right conclusion, that the only scenes of John's baptisms were the wilderness of Judæa, the Perichorus of Jordan, and

[3] "The Evangelist (John) tells us that the Baptist was sojourning 'in Ænon near to Salim,' because there were many springs there (ὅτι ὕδατα πόλλα ἦν ἐκεῖ). Exactly; for עֵין signifies a spring; and שָׁלֵמִים too, like the well-known spring שָׁלֵח, derives its name from the gushing forth of water."—Wieseler, Chr. Syn. p. 225.

[4] P. 311.

the Peræan district of Bethabara[5]. That he was not now in either of the latter two may be shown partly from the language of this Evangelist, partly from that of S. Luke, when he describes the Word of the Lord as summoning him *from* the wilderness of Judæa into the Perichorus of Jordan. It remains only to identify this Ænon with some place in, or adjacent to, the southern portion of the country. "As far as regards the scene of the closing labours of the Baptist," says Wieseler[6], "we learn from Luke that the period of activity which ended in his imprisonment took place in the wilderness of Judah (ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ), and that he betook himself from the wilderness into the περίχωρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου (Luke iii. 2, 3), while this sojourn of his in the wilderness appears identical with that at Αἰνών near to Σαλείμ of which we read in John iii. 23[7]." In Joshua xv. 32 there is mention made of Shilhim, and Ain, and Rimmon, cities of Judah. "The names of a large number of towns and places in Palestine," says Stanley, "are found compounded of Ain (En), as is natural from the importance of living springs in the East." The compound word *En-Rimmon*, "spring of pomegranates[8]," occurs also in Nehem. xi. 29—formed, no doubt, as the same author suggests, out of the two names Ain and Rimmon. The word "*Ænon*" is, as Hengstenberg shows[9],

[5] See above, pp. 123, 125.

[6] P. 223.

[7] Robinson, indeed (iii. 298. 300. 333), is inclined to place Ænon and Salim near Nablous, where lies the plain of Salim; and he is followed by Stanley (p. 311), Ebrard (p. 223), and others. But, as Wieseler pertinently asks, "What brings *the few* (S. John iii. 25) to John and his disciples, if at that time they were sojourning in Samaria?"

"The Evangelist indicates plainly enough that his Ænon is to be looked for in Judæa, for, after having said (iii. 22) that Jesus and His disciples had baptized in the land of Judæa (ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ γῇ), he immediately proceeds, Ἦν δὲ καὶ Ἰωάννης βαπτίζων ἐν Αἰνὼν ἐγγὺς τοῦ Σαλείμ."—Wieseler, p. 224.

"The precise fact had in view is, that the Baptist had abandoned his usual place of baptism at the Jordan."—Tholuck, Comm. on S. John, vol. i. p. 127.

[8] See also Stanley, Sinai, &c., p. 510.

[9] On S. John, i. 196, 197.

a modern development of *Ain*. It seems therefore extremely probable, from the juxtaposition of the names *Ænon and Salim* in S. John, and those of *Ain and Rimmon*[1] (En-Rimmon) and Shilhim in the Book of Joshua, that these were really the same localities; and, if so, they were undoubtedly situated at the southern border of Judæa; for in Zech. xiv. 10 the expression occurs "from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem," denoting the length of the territories of Judah from north to south. This situation would accord very well with the probabilities of the case as regards *John's* preaching, for he himself was a native of Jutta, or, as some think, Hebron, in the hill-country to the south of Jerusalem. But it cannot be reasonably supposed that *Jesus* would travel so far out of the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, considering how widely different were the public parts which John and Himself had to play. A more populous and a more central district must be assigned to the scene of His baptism. That it was not far removed from the *northern* border of Judæa seems intimated by the expression, "He must needs go through Samaria." The *necessity* seems to have arisen partly out of the haste with which the change of locality was made, in consequence of which He would take the nearest route to the north, and partly perhaps from the desire of avoiding the territory of Antipas in Peræa.

During the time in which this joint ministry was being exercised, a further opportunity occurred for still more decisive and explicit testimony on the part of John to the Messiahship and Divinity of Jesus, and to the relation in which he himself stood to his great Master. The baptismal work of Christ had, it is clear, begun to make impression upon the minds of thoughtful Jews; and there seem to have been some of the more reflective class who, taking into consideration the fact that there were *two* personages, each of high repute amongst the devout

[1] See also Josh. xix. 7; 1 Chron. iv. 32.

of the nation, simultaneously practising the baptismal ceremonial, set themselves seriously to estimate the comparative values of their work, and the intrinsic spiritual power contained in the two.

In order to apprehend rightly the language of the Evangelist, it is necessary to assume that some of this class of persons had paid personal visits to both scenes of work, and drawn their own conclusions accordingly. It was on one of these occasions that a certain Jew, whom, both from the usual language of S. John and from the probabilities of the case, we may believe to have been a Pharisee of some distinction, encountered certain of the disciples of John the Baptist on the subject of καθαρισμός, or purification. From the general tenor of the narrative, it would rather seem that the discussion was brought on by these Johannists having visited the scene of Jesus' baptism, where, in course of conversation, the Jew had avowed his decided preference for the efficacy of Christ's work over that of John. The question seems to have been principally that of the respective efficacy of the purification contained in or conveyed by the work of each. That all baptisms implied a spiritual purification was the belief of every Jew who had considered the typology of his own Law.

The preference given by this Jew to the work of Jesus excited apparently not so much the desire of inquiry, as the spirit of jealousy for the honour of their Master, on the part of the disciples of John. They made their way back to the Baptist and, in tones partially of complaint, partly also of request for a solution of the difficulty, informed him that the Personage "who was with him beyond Jordan," to whom he had himself borne witness, had now also commenced the baptismal work, and that He was actually attracting all men to Himself.

The answer of John places the character of the fore-

that, while rarely trespassing upon the area of their records, he constantly directs the attention of his readers to matters which they had omitted, pausing as soon as he reaches a period which they have any of them taken for a new starting-point, and taking up the thread again where they leave it off.

If we had but S. John's narrative to guide us, we should be left in complete ignorance of the circumstances which led to and attended the imprisonment of the Baptist, and be apt to imagine that both he and the Lord continued their joint ministrations in the locality of Ænon up to the time when Jesus left for Galilee: but from the Gospel of S. Luke we learn otherwise. At some time before that event—probably not less than three or four months before—he had quitted the spot where S. John's narrative leaves him, and had obeyed the call of the Spirit by returning to the scene of his earlier ministrations in the Perichorus of Jordan.

PERICHORUS OF JORDAN. CIRC. NOV., A.D. 27.

It is this change of scene which S. Luke alludes to in that precise notice which he gives of John's preaching in his famous third chapter. Considering the marked resemblance which the Baptist's message in some respects bears in S. Luke's narrative to that in S. Matt. iii. and S. Mark i., it is not at all a matter of wonder that they have all been so long supposed to refer to one and the same period—that in fact the three passages are strictly parallel and in harmony. Some doubt is, however, cast upon the correctness of this supposition by the fact that it is thus utterly impossible to bring the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar into harmony with the remainder of the narrative. I assume, therefore, the correctness of Wieseler's opinion, that the statement of S. Luke refers *not to the original call* of the Baptist, *but to his second* (perhaps even the fourth) summons, in the Wilderness of Judæa. Although undoubtedly

there is much here that is common to the narratives of S. Matthew and S. Luke, yet there is also much in the latter which is *entirely peculiar*. *All three* Synoptists relate the testimony which he bore to the coming of One greater than himself, whose shoe's latchet he described himself as unworthy to unloose; but this agreement proves nothing as to the common subject of their notice; for, as the forerunner of the Messiah, this is nothing but what he must have repeatedly and constantly urged upon the minds of the people, who were not unnaturally disposed to consider so remarkable a man as himself the expected Messiah[7]. Again, as the "Voice" of one whose duty and business it was to prepare the way of the Lord by the preaching of repentance, he must have persisted in that stern reprobation of the Pharisees, whenever they forced the opportunity upon him, to which both S. Matthew and S. Luke have given prominence. There is nothing whatever, therefore, in their common matter which necessarily fixes their two accounts as belonging to one and the same identical period of his preaching. Moreover, as it is certain that he preached in two successive years, it is strange if, out of three notices of his work, not one should belong to the second year, especially when we consider that S. Luke's account is supplementary to the former two, and breaks new ground altogether in a great number of instances. I apprehend, therefore, that the Voice which spoke in the neighbourhood of the Jordan in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar began again to be heard after the time that he had been baptizing in Ænon. It was from hence that the Spirit summoned him to that final enunciation which provoked the jealousy of a tyrant, as it had already aroused the hatred of the rulers of his own people, who gave him up to Antipas as a sacrifice to a common enmity. If so, the migration of John must have occurred after the 19th of

[7] Luke iii. 15.

August, which was the date of the fifteenth anniversary of the death of Augustus, and of the consequent accession of Tiberius.

There was very much in his exhortations to the people which none of the Evangelists have transcribed for our information as, in fact, S. Luke tells us in iii. 18; and it was naturally so, since their object was to write a narrative of the work of Jesus and not of John

In the account of S. Luke, however, there are two classes of persons mentioned (both of which are peculiar to his account), to whom the Baptist addressed especial and pertinent advice upon their own request preferred, as it would seem, in honesty and sincerity of purpose. These were (1), some publicans, a body of whom, bad as was their repute among their own people, we hear of no instances, in reference to the ministry of John and Jesus, but to their credit; (2) certain soldiers who, happening to be engaged at the time in some expedition, passed on their march the scene of John's labours, and, upon perhaps a midday halt, attracted by his preaching and drawn into the circle of his hearers, inquired for their own part in what way his exhortations would affect them in their calling. As there is no evidence that Antipas and his father-in-law Aretas, the King of Arabia Petræa (although long on bad terms in consequence of the repudiation by the former of his lawful wife, the daughter of that Prince), had yet ventured upon actual hostilities, it is probable that these men were a part of Herod's troops marching, probably from Bethsaida Julias, on the north-eastern border of the Lake of Tiberias to Machærus, the stronghold of Herod, on the borders of Aretas' dominions. Machærus was a strong fortress, situated upon the N.E. of the Dead Sea, and a frequent resort of Antipas. It was in fact his head quarters in the south, and was of consequence as the main outpost of his dominions against the Arabians of Petræa.

At some time after this, towards the close of the year, the abominable conduct of Herod Antipas, in prevailing upon Herodias, who was already married to one of his own half-brothers, Philip, to quit her husband and marry himself (although also her own *uncle*), drew down the indignant and apparently public reprobation of the Prophet. Exasperated himself by the unrestrained freedom with which the Baptist denounced his evil courses, urged on by the vindictive jealousy of Herodias herself, and, according to the testimony of Josephus, seriously alarmed at the great influence which John had acquired over the people, which influence he feared might at any time excite them to open insurrection against himself, Herod determined upon the removal of the obnoxious personage. By the assistance and connivance of the Sanhedrim themselves, now also seriously exasperated and alarmed[8], he at length seized upon the person of John, and caused him to be imprisoned in the already-mentioned fortress of Machærus.

This act of violence occurred, as has been said, probably towards the close of the year A.D. 27. On hearing of it, and being aware also that He was now Himself becoming an object of suspicion and mark to the Sanhedrim, Jesus finally quitted Judæa, and renounced it from thenceforth as the scene of His continuous ministry.

[8] "The Pharisaic party had probably contributed to the Baptist's imprisonment, if not by any direct communication with Herod Antipas, at least by allowing him to understand that they were not favourable to the movement which the Baptist's preaching created."—Forshall, First 12 cc. of S. Matthew, note on iv. 12.

APPENDIX

ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF S. JOHN iv. 1—3.

IT has been shown that Jesus, after an abode of some seven or eight months in Judæa, came to the determination of suddenly quitting that country and transferring His ministerial operations to the remote district of Galilee. They could be no light reasons which caused Him thus to withdraw from the country of which He was by birth a native, and which was in every way, and under every aspect, the natural and appropriate scene and area of the work of One who testified that "Salvation was of the Jews[1]."

The reasons by which Jesus was actuated in this sudden apparent change of purpose demand attentive consideration. For, by a right understanding of the circumstances of the case, a most important period in the history of His public labours is thus chronologically determined. The great question to be settled is this—whether the journey described in S. John iv. 1—3 is the same as that which is prominently and emphatically put forward by the Synoptists Matt. iv. 12, Mark i. 14, Luke iv. 14. Upon this point the German chronologer Wieseler, already referred to, to whose labours in this department of criticism the theological world is deeply indebted, has expressed himself decidedly in the negative in an elaborate argument, into which it is impossible here fully to enter. He considers that the narrative contained in "John i. 19—v. 47 must be inserted before Matt. iv. 12, and the parallels; because the lengthened

[1] John iv. 22, see below, p. 218.

Judæan ministry of our Lord there related finds no place at any later period of the synoptical relation[2]."

Whatever may be thought of the remarkable ingenuity by which this author supports his calculations, and the conclusions which he draws from them, it is, I conceive, impossible to accept his chronology in the present instance. It is a point of the very greatest importance, because upon it depends the question whether a period of 15 months is entirely passed over by the Synoptical Evangelists, or whether the notes of the ministry of Christ are not, although at times scantily, still by occasional hints and marks, extended with moderate evenness over the greater part of His ministerial career. It is indeed but natural to suppose (and a careful examination of the history confirms us in the belief,) that these notices will become fuller as the time draws nigh for the consummation of the great Scheme of Redemption; but it is almost too much to suppose that a period of 15 months in a career of (in all) but $3\frac{1}{2}$ years should be passed over in almost total silence. If, indeed, it could be shown that there is no alternative but so to regard the narrative of the Gospels, there is no help for it but to suppose that the preliminary portion of the ministerial career of Jesus bore to the latter part (in itself but a small portion of the whole) so slight a relation in its emphasis and importance as to throw the earlier months into comparative insignificance. But this, I do not think, can be altogether shown; nor, do I conceive, has Wieseler here entirely perceived the exceeding difficulties into which his peculiar system has drawn him. Throughout his work there is apparent a wide contrast of arrangement—a great crowding of events of great magnitude into a compass too narrow for their comprehension upon any ordinary principles of historical development, and an undue expansion of times of comparative emptiness of all details of interest and importance.

[2] Chron. Syn., p. 149.

In the present instance there is a question of more than an entire year, according as we believe that the retirement spoken of by John iv. 1 is identical with that above alluded to as related by the Synoptists, or whether we are to connect their account with a later journey mentioned in c. vi. 1 [3]. If the latter view be assumed, there is a lapse at once of a whole year entirely unaccounted for by any the smallest allusion; and we are led to suppose that, although Jesus had been consecrated to His office at least 18 months before (upon Wieseler's own showing), He contented Himself with working nearly all this period simultaneously with John, assuming to Himself no higher position, giving no proof by miracles of His credentials, and finally restricting the great bulk of His labours to a period of 15 months. On this principle the forerunner would have been actively at work during more than two years of the Messiah's own career, thus taking away much of the weight and truth from his own testimony that "He must increase, but I must decrease [4]." By his arrangement, also, the German chronologer would require us to suppose that a period also of two years elapses between the record of the short visit and ministry in Galilee in the spring of A.D. 27, and that active commencement of labour which dates from His relinquishment of His own city Nazareth for Capernaum. Within the compass of 16 days, i. e. from April 2 to April 17, we are thus required (*inter alia*) to crowd the following events:—1. The call of the Four at the sea of Tiberias. 2. The ordination of the Twelve. 3. The inquiry of the Baptist as to the real character of Jesus (when he had been in prison less than 3 weeks). 4. The mission of the Twelve, and their return after a circuit of the whole of Galilee. 5. The tidings of the death of John brought

[3] It may be observed here that this later journey was not undertaken from motives of caution and safety, as was that in John iv. 1, and that in the synoptical accounts. This is another argument against any other harmony than that here contended for.

[4] John iii. 30.

back by the Twelve; and 6. The feeding of the 5000 at or near the Passover of April 17 (or 16, A.D. 29)!

Now it does seem preposterous to suppose that the Baptist, who must have been ministering in the neighbourhood of Jesus for so long a time, could have been so perplexed by accounts received when he could not have lain in prison *many days;* or that, indeed, by that time Jesus could have worked so many miracles of which the tidings could have been conveyed to him so to embarrass and perplex his mind.

In fact, it seems certain that the cause of John's perplexity arose from the fact of the long period during which Jesus had been ministering alone, and the absence of all signs of the establishment of that Kingdom of Heaven which he himself had announced long ago as "*at hand.*"

It may be quite true, and it seems natural to believe, that Jesus did not *at first* work many miracles, and that His work proceeded in a greatly accelerated degree as the time drew near for the final consummation. There is ample evidence that this was so, in point of fact. But to assign a comparative inactivity to so long a time, or to suppose that the Evangelists have left unrecorded, even by slight hint or notice, so many months of the life of Jesus, leads us to wonder how it came to pass that His consecration took place at so much earlier a period than the necessity of His work seems to have demanded.

That the difficulty into which Wieseler's arrangement necessarily leads is not exaggerated, will be evident from the following passage relating to the mission of the Twelve according to his chronology:—

"This (Sabbath on which our Lord taught for the second time in the synagogue of Nazareth, His paternal city) must be fixed on the 13th of Nisan = *April 16th. Then, too,* and that suitably enough, as it was a sabbath, and shortly before the feast, *our Lord sent forth the Twelve* to exercise their ministry independently. At that time Herod Antipas sought to see Jesus, because he was continually hearing more and more of the fame of His

ministry, and believed that in Him the Baptist had risen from the dead. On the *return of the Apostles, which must have happened on the 14th of Nisan* (= April 17th), towards evening, about the time when the Paschal lamb was eaten in Jerusalem, our Lord fed the five thousand on the eastern shore of the lake near Bethsaida."—Wieseler, Chron. Syn., p. 264.

So that (1) we are required to believe that the apostles (two by two) actually traversed the entire circuit of the country, teaching and healing "every where" "through the towns," *in the space of about* 36 *hours*, including time for repose and rest! and (2) that, at the time when the Paschal lamb was being actually eaten in Jerusalem, 5000 men, besides women and children, could be found in Galilee, readily assembled together, who for divers reasons were incapacitated from attending the greatest solemnity of their religion so stringently enjoined upon them by the law of Moses!

I have given the very words of Wieseler (Venables' Translation), lest such an extravagant view should seem to have arisen out of any misconception or misrepresentation of his meaning.

The following remarks apply to a similar error in Bishop Ellicott's Hulsean Lectures, p. 193, seq.

"Now, what are the transactions which, if we believe the Evangelists, and take their words in the natural sense, we must assign to the interval between the departure from Nazareth and the assembling of our Lord and His Apostles at Capernaum, comprised, as Dean Ellicott contends, in this Nisan 13?

"1. The journeying of our Lord, in company with His apostles, described in Mark vi. 6, and Matthew ix. 35, about cities and villages, teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the coming of the kingdom, healing every disease and every sickness among the people; the observations which our Lord made of the spiritual destitution of the people; a course of prayer prescribed, and no doubt practised, for an increase of Gospel labourers.

"2. The assembling of the apostles together to receive their Master's instructions; the delivery of the instructions at great length and with much solemnity; arrangements so that the seven different routes taken by our Lord and the Apostles through the country might not interfere with each other; the fixing upon the time and place for reassembling.

"3. The going out of the Apostles, their visiting the towns preaching the Gospel, healing every where, casting out many devils, anointing with oil many that were sick and healing them.

"4. The reassembling in Capernaum; the receiving and attending to the numerous applicants for instruction or relief; the relation by six different parties of all their teachings and all their doings.

"We must suppose, if we adopt Dean Ellicott's notions, that the circuit so precisely mentioned by S. Mark, and so fully described by S. Matthew, had nevertheless no specific existence whatever.

"We must suppose, that though the distance from Nazareth to Capernaum by the nearest road would have been something like twenty-five English miles, and to some of those travelling by seven different roads the distance would have been considerably greater, a single day afforded time not only for these long journeys, but for the delivery of the instructions to the apostles at the commencement of their mission, and for the recital of their proceedings at its close; and, besides all this, for teachings in synagogues, abidings in private houses, proclamations of the Gospel, public testimonies against unbelief, anointings of the sick, and exorcisms of the demoniacal.

"We must suppose that our Lord, having arranged with His apostles to meet Him again at Capernaum the very same night, bids them in the first words of His charge not to go into the way of the Gentiles nor to enter into any city of the Samaritans. How was it possible that they should? The nearest point of intercourse with the Gentiles was several days' journey distant, the cities of Samaria were in an opposite direction from Capernaum.

"We must suppose that our Lord, having for very strong reasons quitted Capernaum two or three days previously, went directly back, without any alleged or discoverable reason whatever.

"We must suppose that our Blessed Lord, who under all circumstances was self-possessed, serious, and deliberate, at a crisis of His history which had brought out the exhibition of these qualities in a marked manner, and on an occasion which on His own account, as well as on that of His apostles, seemed to call for the greatest prudence and caution, adopted a line of conduct the very reverse, not less alien to His habits and character than inappropriate to the exigencies of the moment, and hurried across the country, Himself and the six bands of Apostles, teaching and preaching and working miracles; so that the population of the whole tract passed over, having fresh in mind the astonishing powers which our Lord had displayed in the immediate neighbourhood a few days before, must have been thrown into great excitement, and, naturally accompanying Him and His Apostles to the end of their journey, must have given to our Lord's return to Capernaum the appearance of a designed ovation, and created serious alarm to the authorities of the town[5]."

I conceive, therefore, that the journey which S. John describes in c. vi. 1 cannot be brought to coincide with that alluded to by the Synoptists (p. 182), because it is impossible

[5] Forshall, Preface to S. Mark, pp. xlvii, xlviii.

to avoid the difficulties which it involves; and which are, as must be confessed, insuperable. There remains, therefore, nothing with which S. John iv. 1 can be identified but the retirement to which so much prominence is given by the three Synoptists, as before said.

There is, however, a difficulty in the reconciliation of the accounts which meets us at the very outset. John ascribes the movement of Jesus to the reports which reached Him of the information conveyed to the Sanhedrim regarding the preference given to His baptism over that of John the Baptist. The Synoptists, on their part, state emphatically that it was the news of *John's imprisonment* which determined Jesus to quit at once the scene of His first labours, and withdraw into the less strictly Jewish region of Galilee. It is, in some measure, this apparent dissidence between the evangelical writers which has disinclined Wieseler to admit the harmony of their reference to the same event. The question, therefore, must be examined with something more of circumstantial detail.

The real fact of the case, as it seems to me, is that they not only are referring to one and the same event, but that the fourth Evangelist, after his usual practice, avoiding rather than repeating the views of his predecessors, has chosen rather to supply what he perceived to be deficient in their accounts, and to furnish an explanation of the movements of Jesus which does not appear very clearly in the language of the others[6]. In

[6] Ebrard, whose remarks upon this subject I had not met with until this section had been written, coincides entirely with this view of the matter.

"The Evangelist John, who was well acquainted with the fact of the Baptist's imprisonment (c. iii. 24) and took for granted that his readers were the same, and who seems to intimate in this very passage that it took place shortly after the occurrences described in c. iii. 22—36, saw no necessity for giving another circumstantial account of his arrest; but thought it better to point out, as clearly as possible, the precise reason for Christ's removal to Galilee. As the Synoptists had mentioned, in a general way, that the arrest of John the Baptist was the cause, the question put by modern critics

so doing he takes substantially the same view which they have done of the matter, viz. that it was a crisis of the very highest moment in the ministerial career of Jesus which determined Him to relinquish His proper Judæan work, and transfer His mighty power to the less regarded inhabitants of the North. To the three earlier Evangelists it was a crisis of magnitude, because it became the point from which they regarded the commencement of their narratives. To S. John it equally assumed importance, as bringing to a close that which he himself considered as the proper ministry of his Master in His own country, Judæa[7], from which the malice of those who should have been His own, but who received Him not, caused Him sorrowfully to withdraw. That this Evangelist, the intimate bosom friend of his Lord, did so regard the Judæan platform is plain from the way in which he ever after reverts to it, and chronicles those deeply interesting works and words which still from time to time, on the occasions of the great feasts, were suffered to appeal to unrepenting minds in testimony to the mighty Truth.

The question is, then, how are the two statements to be reconciled?

Now the most important and striking fact connected with the question is, that neither reason alleged seems, taken by itself, adequate to explain the departure of Jesus from Judæa.

1. It is not easy to see why the imprisonment of the Baptist, *taken by itself*, should have exerted so strong an influence upon the mind of Jesus. It can be considered only in one of two

would very naturally suggest itself,—why should Jesus go straight into the territory of His persecutor? John, therefore, explains the real connexion between the arrest of the Baptist and the removal of Jesus to Galilee."—Ebrard, Gosp. Hist., p. 231.

[7] This, it is clear from the entire construction of S. John's Gospel, is his view of the proper area of the ministry of Christ. But this is not what is meant by the ἰδία πατρίς in S. John iv. 44.

ways, viz. either as removing an obstacle to the development of His ministry, or as affording grounds for personal apprehension on His part. Now it is true that from the date of John's imprisonment Jesus began to preach, and enter upon His active course[8]; but that can be considered only as the natural result of the removal of the forerunner. Jesus was now alone in His work, the preliminary preparation had been completed, and it was both natural and necessary that He should enter at once upon the regular work of His Mission. Moreover, John's ministry had been exercised not in Galilee or Samaria, but in Peræa, in the Judæan wilderness, and in the Perichorus of Jordan.

2. If, again, the mere fact of John's imprisonment is all we have to look to as the ground of fear to Jesus, it is difficult to see on what principle He acted in retiring to the dominions of the very prince by whom His relative had been just imprisoned, if the cause of danger to Himself lay in the intentions of Herod Antipas. But that this was not the case we learn from the very facts of the sacred narrative itself.

The cause of John's incarceration was the jealousy of Herodias, whom Herod Antipas had persuaded to quit her own husband Philip, his own half-brother. The stern reprobation of the Prophet against the incestuous wrong had incensed the revengeful woman; and at her instance, as well as, doubtless, through fear of the public denunciations of John, Herod had cast the undaunted Preacher of Repentance into prison. We discern, then, nothing here which can throw light upon the movements of Jesus, or account for the well-grounded fears by which He was actuated in His decision.

To turn now to the statement of S. John iv. 1, that it was owing to the intelligence conveyed to the Pharisees regarding the preference conceived for His baptism over that of the fore-

[8] Matt. iv. 12—17; Mark i. 14, 15.

runner—and there is as little cause here discoverable in the words, *taken by themselves*, as in those just examined.

There are here, as in the previous case, but two grounds imaginable which could have led to the retirement of Jesus. Either (1) the Sanhedrim must have resented, through partisanship of the Baptist, the growing popularity of Jesus; or (2) there must have been some action on their part antagonistic to the *former* which was likely to tell with even greater force *against the latter*. But the former supposition is entirely excluded by the known rejection of John's baptism by the Pharisees [9], in consequence of the severe invectives which he persisted in launching against such of their body as, attracted either by curiosity or a hypocritical desire to stand well with the people, presented themselves before the Preacher of the Wilderness. We can, therefore, only fall back upon the other hypothesis, that there had been some overt act of hostility on their part against John, which boded even deeper designs against One whose popularity, arising out of similar grounds, already transcended John's with the people. But although this is hinted at by the Evangelist John, he nowhere here gives the slightest intimation *what that danger was*, or what act had occurred by which any such danger could be prognosticated or inferred.

It is here that, assuming the identity of this notice of S. John iv. 1 with that of the other three writers already mentioned, we are able to obtain some insight into the true state of things. If S. John has in this instance followed his usual practice of supplementing the known records of his predecessors, it is abundantly evident why he has assigned what is erroneously viewed as a different reason for the retirement of Jesus. John had been thrust into prison (according to the one account); and the Pharisees, or rather the Sanhedrim which is here included, had (according to the other) received tidings of the

[9] See Luke vii. 30.

growing ascendency of Jesus. Putting the two together, the conclusion is irresistible that the imprisonment of John, though the *act* of Herod Antipas, was really the result of the jealousy and animosity of the Pharisees, who not only smarted under his severe invectives, but found that the great body of the people were becoming disaffected to their assumed superiority through his teaching. If this were the case, then it is not difficult to see why the tidings of the popularity of Jesus, having formed a subject of discussion in the supreme council of the Jews, should have seriously affected the course of conduct now pursued by Jesus. It is clear that His real danger lay in the designs, not of Herod Antipas, but of the Council; and hence it is not surprising that He should have withdrawn into the territory of that prince from whom He could have nothing to fear, and who, as subsequent events showed, never evinced any other feeling than that of curiosity to see Him, in consequence of the fame of His miracles [1].

The imprisonment of John, then, we cannot doubt, must have been the result of a concerted plan between the Sanhedrim and Herod Antipas [2]. Each had their own reasons for desiring his removal from all active ministrations amongst the people.

[1] See Luke ix. 9; xxiii. 8.

[2] Jesus Himself appears to intimate as much: "I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and *they* have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him" (Mark ix. 13). See Forshall, First 12 chapters, on iv. 12.

Hengstenberg takes the same view as that advocated in the text :—

"The Pharisaic opposition to the Baptist was one of principle; it was based on the circumstance that he made and baptized disciples, and toward Jesus, who made and baptized more disciples, their hatred must have been all the more violent. That which is here intimated by John obtains greater definiteness directly it is regarded as the supplement of Matt. iv. 12, Mark i. 14. We learn that the Pharisees especially had reason to be embittered against the Baptist from Matt. iii. 7, where he salutes them as γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν, and where the Sadducees occupy only a subordinate and parenthetical position. That which we conclude from Matthew is distinctly stated by John."—Hengstenberg on S. John, i. 211.

The only question is why the matter should not have rested with Herod alone, and why the Pharisaic body needed to be mixed up in it at all. The ministrations of John were confined to Peræa, Judæa, and the Perichorus of Jordan. Now, if the view here taken of the time of the journey to Sychar be correct, John had been up to within a short period of that time baptizing in Judæa, which was ecclesiastically under the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim, subject to the civil government of the Roman Procurator of the district. The fourth Gospel, as has been shown, assigns the district of Ænon, near to Salim, as the precise locality of his latest baptizing previously to his migration into the Peræan Perichorus of the Jordan. It has also been shown that this place must have been in the southern borders of Judæa.

John had therefore been for some months exercising his ministrations in the neighbourhood of the chief strength of the Pharisaic party, where we know not only that he had excited attention and made many disciples out of the Jewish people, but must have incurred the bitter hatred of the Pharisees by his uncompromising denunciations of their hypocrisy and evil lives. It is therefore the natural inference from the double account that his imprisonment was the result of a mutual understanding between the Sanhedrim and Herod; for the former were naturally jealous of any the smallest interference with their own powers and privileges, especially on the part of one whom they justly regarded as a foreigner, and to whose family's dynastic pretensions they had, as a body, always been deeply hostile. If this were the case, it is not difficult to see at once both the danger in which Jesus stood, and the reason of His resorting for safety to the dominions of the very Prince who had just lately imprisoned His own relative. Whatever *John* had said or done sank into insignificance before the fact (recorded carefully by S. John) that *Jesus* had but a few months

before cleansed the Temple from the profanation induced by the rapacity and connivance of the Priests; and that He had done so giving no other sign of Messianic authority than an enigmatical expression to which they could find no clue unless they interpreted it, as they would not, of the Incarnation. Whatever danger then the Baptist incurred from the animosity of the Priestly or Pharisaic party (for to all intents they may be regarded as one), it was tenfold greater in the case of Jesus. The only difference was that there was nothing for Him to fear from Herod Antipas, whose private passions He had never interfered with, and who had quite enough upon his hands already in order to deal satisfactorily with the Baptist. But if He remained in Judæa, it is not difficult to see that the thoroughly awakened jealousy and fears of the Sanhedrim would have handed Him over to *Pilate*, the newly appointed governor of Judæa, who, they probably thought, would feel small scruple in purchasing a cheap popularity by the sacrifice of an obnoxious, though obscure, individual.

The history of Josephus here trenches upon the Gospel narrative, and it is important to learn what he has to say upon this subject. And it is remarkable that he assigns, as the reason of Herod's conduct, *the fears of John's popularity*, that it might lead to a rising of the people, who seemed to be entirely in his hands, against his own rule[3]. Now this is the more important to be observed, inasmuch as the charge upon which Pilate did afterwards actually condemn Jesus was that

[3] "Now when (many) others came in crowds about him, for they were greatly moved (or pleased) by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise rebellion (for they seemed to do any thing he should advise), thought it best by putting him to death to prevent any mischief he might cause and not bring himself into difficulties by sparing a man who might make him repent of it when it should be too late. Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, out of Herod's suspicious temper, to Machærus,—and there put to death."—Josephus, Antt., xviii. 5. 2.

He was a "stirrer up" of the people[4]. It is no objection that the Evangelists do not allude to this fact, inasmuch as their intention was simply to show the cause which led to John's execution. Herod's motive was twofold, and it was only the private element in it which brought about John's death. During the time that the Baptist was in prison, it is clear from S. Mark's account that Herod had come to understand the preacher better; and, but for Herodias, it is more than probable that he would have soon released him. In point of fact, his lengthened imprisonment seems to have been in great measure due to a desire on Herod's part to shield him from the attempts of Herodias[5]. The circumstances which led immediately to his death were undoubtedly planned by her, in despair of any immediate prospect of satisfying her revenge by other means.

If any thing else is wanting to confirm the belief that Wieseler is wrong in his arrangement of this part of the Gospel narrative, it is only necessary to remark that he is compelled to limit the duration of John's imprisonment to *three weeks*. How does this give time for Herod to have become so well acquainted with him as to send for him *often*, and to take pleasure at last in his preaching[6]? And how can it be imagined that, after an absence from the outer world of a fortnight or so, he could have sent such a message as he did to Jesus (S. Luke vii. 19), of whom (according to this supposition) he must have been in constant habit of hearing during some eight or nine months of their joint ministry in the land of Judæa[7]?

[4] Luke xxiii. 5.

[5] Such seems to be the meaning of S. Mark's expression *συνετήρει αὐτόν*. See Wordsworth also on S. Mark vi. 20.

[6] Mark vi. 20.

[7] Wieseler, indeed (p. 224), considers that both Jesus and John were baptizing in Ænon. But this interpretation cannot, I submit, be established upon critical grounds. That Jesus and John were baptizing at no very great distance from each other is implied by the text of S. John, but that they

I consider it certain, therefore (with Ebrard, Ellicott, Hengstenberg, and others), that the texts Matt. iv. 12, Mark i. 14, Luke iv. 14, and John iv. 1—3 (not vi. 1) do harmonize and refer to one and the same occurrence, viz: the *second return* of Jesus into Galilee after His baptism; the *former one* having taken place in the spring of the year, after which He returned to Jerusalem in April for the feast of the Passover, continuing from that time to the present, (i. e. from about April 15 to about the latter end of December, or perhaps the beginning of January, a period in all of nearly eight months [8],) teaching and baptizing somewhere near the northern borders of Judæa [9], until the fame of His ministry reaching the ears of the Sanhedrim resulted in certain designs on their part, which compelled Him to withdraw for safety [1] into the northern territory of Galilee.

The date of the imprisonment of John may not improbably be fixed about the middle of October, just after the feast of Tabernacles [2], at which the presence of Antipas in Jerusalem

were both at Ænon is both contrary to all probability and unsupported by the language of the original. (See p. 172, sqq.)

[8] The writer of the article on "Jesus Christ," in the Enc. Brit., takes a similar view to this. "He seems to have continued in the land of Judæa about six or seven months, when the success of His preaching exciting the attention and envy of the Scribes and Pharisees, led Him to withdraw into Galilee where the power of the Jewish Sanhedrim was less to be dreaded."—Encycl. Brit., vol. xii. p. 559.

[9] The supposition of this locality, which seems intimated by the text of John, is corroborated by the fact that Jesus took the route through Samaria instead of crossing the ford of Jericho into Judæa. It was His nearest and manifestly His safest road.

[1] The force of the entire argument rests very much on the meaning of the verb ἀναχωρεῖν, which invariably means to "withdraw" or "retire" for safety, or privacy, or precaution of some kind. See above, p. 18.

[2] "As regards the difference between John iii. 22—24, and Matt. iv. 12, we can certainly perceive from v. 24 that the oral tradition fixed the imprisonment of John pretty nearly about the same time with the appearance of Jesus."—Tholuck on S. John, p. 126.

The great and fundamental mistake which Wieseler has made on this [illegible] is in assuming that S. John iv. 1—3 indicates that at the beginning of

would give the opportunity for the concerted measures between him and the Pharisees. It would therefore be after October 11; and Herod would probably have taken his prisoner with him on his route back into Peræa, where Machærus was situated, in his own dominions. In this case there would be a period of about two months left, which would well account for the fame of Jesus reaching the ears of the Council, especially as He would now seem to have been left without a rival.

Anticipating, then, the argument by which the *year* itself is fixed, the following dates of importance may now be considered established.

1. The imprisonment of John at the close of the second week in October[3].

2. The close of the Judæan ministry of Jesus at the end of the first week in December.

The total ministry of John would thus have lasted during eighteen months, and the Judæan ministry of Christ during eight months, the first six of which synchronized with the last six of John's.

The year, as I apprehend, was that of A.D. 27, corresponding with 780 A.U.C. and 4740 A.J.P. on the 19th of August, in which year, the fifteenth year from the death of Augustus, and (consequently) the *fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar*, commenced.

It is necessary to develope the argument upon this point at some length.

The most precise note of time which we meet with in the Gospels is that supplied by S. Luke in the beginning of his third chapter.

this (the 2nd) journey of Jesus into Galilee recorded by this Evangelist, "The Baptist was still exercising his ministry in perfect freedom." The assumption is perfectly gratuitous, and as I have endeavoured to show, quite erroneous. See Wies., p. 148. It vitiates his entire argument.

[3] The feast of Tabernacles began in the year assigned on October 4; consequently it would have ended on October 11.

"In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judæa, and Herod being Tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip Tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the Tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the High Priests (or, *in the time of Chief Priest Annas, and of Caiaphas*) the Word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness."

These words evidently form the *commencement* of the Gospel of S. Luke, properly so called. The previous portion of his account is solely preliminary, and manifestly intended to form a link by which to connect the Old Testament with the New. Now the commencement of his Gospel dates, as I hope to show, from the time when Jesus began to preach in the cities of Galilee; and this is immediately connected by all the Evangelists with the imprisonment of John the Baptist.

The notes of time with which he furnishes us are six in number.

1. The year is the fifteenth of the reign of Tiberius.
2. Pontius Pilate is Governor of Judæa.
3. Herod Antipas is Tetrarch of Galilee.
4. Herod Philip is Tetrarch of Ituræa, &c.
5. Lysanias is Tetrarch of Abilene.
6. It is during the office of Chief Priest Annas and Caiaphas.

Leaving for the present the question of the fifteenth year of Tiberius, we may without much dificulty assign what is the most important point towards fixing that date, viz., the *terminus à quo*.

The death of Herod the Great, which is the point from which Nos. 2, 3, 4, and 5 must be reckoned, occurred at some time during the last week in March or the first week in April, B.C. 4 (see p 53). Upon his death his dominions were divided into three parts, of which the South, or Judæa, was assigned by the Emperor Augustus to Archelaus, with the title of Ethnarch, the higher title of King being held out to him in prospect contingently upon his good behaviour. At the same time Herod Antipas was made governor of Galilee, and his other brother

Philip Governor of Ituræa and Trachonitis. In the year A.D. 7, however, in consequence of complaints forwarded to Rome against Archelaus by the Jews, he was deposed by the Emperor, and banished to Vienne in Gaul. From that time Judæa was placed under the government of an imperial officer called the Procurator, acting under the superior orders of the Proconsul of Syria. Pontius Pilatus, whose name now becomes so conspicuous in connexion with the crucifixion of Jesus, was the sixth in order of these officers. His appointment (or rather his entry thereupon) took place in the year A.D. 26, in the summer quarter probably[4]. He continued in office for ten years, when, in consequence of complaints preferred against him by the Samaritans, he was recalled by Vitellius in the year A.D. 36, according to the testimony of the Jewish historian Josephus. Herod Antipas continued in the enjoyment of his government until the death of the Emperor Tiberius himself. Philip died in the nineteenth year of that Emperor's reign.

It will be observed that S. Luke designates both Antipas and Philip as "Tetrarchs," that is, governors of fourth parts of the country or, more strictly speaking, of the dominions which Herod the Great governed at the time of his death. Three of these portions have been already enumerated, although the southern portion, being then a Roman province and governed by a Roman officer, was not actually so styled. It is the use of this term *Tetrarch*, in all probability, which caused S. Luke to enumerate in his list the name of Lysanias as the Tetrarch of Abilene[5]. The difficulty upon this point is well known, S. Luke being the only authority apparently for the fact of a Lysanias being at that time in possession of those territories,

[4] For this portion of history I see no reason for disturbing Greswell's dates. See his vol. i. 347—352.

[5] On this point Wieseler's work may be consulted with advantage, pp. 159—167.

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in S. John, and those of *Ain an*
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rgument regarding the Priesthood of Annas and
ill be found fully stated hereafter[7]. It must therefore
e to assume the proof there given that by the words
vangelist in this place it is intended that, at the time
Annas was the President or "Nasi" of the Sanhedrim,
Caiaphas was '*de facto*,' the High Priest. If any thing
is needed to strengthen the arguments there put forth,
be observed that if Annas were really the *High Priest*
time, there is no conceivable reason why Caiaphas
d have been mentioned at all. He held no other office
h could entitle him to notice; and he was not individually
fficient importance to demand especial remark. His term
ffice was, as is stated below, from the year A.D. 25 to A.D. 37.
It only remains now to consider (1) what is intended by the
year of Tiberius, i.e. from what event in his public
e calculated; (2) what particular period in the his-
ospel S. Luke intends to mark out so distinctly by

[7] See, below, the note upon the subject.

This fifteenth year has been the subject, as is well known, of very much discussion. The natural view of the question would be, of course, that it dates from the accession of Tiberius to the throne. The date, however, which this calculation seems to lead to has been found to clash so seriously with the chronological arrangements generally made, that recourse has been had to what is called the *Hegemony* of Tiberius, that is, his association in the government by the Emperor Augustus about two years before his death. This supposition of course throws back the fifteenth year of Tiberius two years earlier, and so gains time for the arrangement of the events of the Gospel narrative, which upon the usual and common method become postponed to too late a date, and are rendered incapable of satisfactory adjustment.

On this point, however, Wieseler's argument seems in itself sound and satisfactory, although I do not arrive at the same conclusions as himself, for quite other and independent reasons. He argues very justly that there is no instance any where of any such mode of calculation of this reign by any historian. So precise indeed is S. Luke in his definition of the period he intends to mark down, that it is inconceivable that he should have adopted so unusual and indeed unheard-of mode of reckoning; or that, if he did adopt it, he should not have made it clear that he was deviating from the natural and ordinary mode of historical computation. With Wieseler, therefore, I cordially agree in believing that S. Luke did intend to mark a precise year by the natural mode of reckoning, and that the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar is to be calculated from the year when he actually began to reign, viz. the year in which his predecessor Augustus quitted life.

The variations in the arrangement of the events of the Gospel history have arisen partly from this divergence of views upon the subject of the establishment of this year. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that writers have had recourse

to the shift described, because otherwise they could not bring their chronology to fit. But, as of necessity follows where there is a fundamental error, they have not been successful by its adoption in establishing satisfactory conclusions.

The great point in question is, in fact, what is the year from which the accession of Tiberius is to be reckoned; in other words, what was the true year of the death of Augustus Cæsar?

It is commonly stated in the chronological tables and in works of ancient Biography, that Augustus died on the 19th of August, A.D. 14, at the town of Nola in Campania, in the 76th year of his age, to the completion of which he wanted but 35 days, having been born on the 23rd September, A.U.C. 691, in the consulship of M. T. Cicero and C. Antonius. It is evident, therefore, that the fifteenth year of Tiberius, dating from the day of Augustus' death, on which he became Emperor of Rome, would thus *commence* on August 19, A.U.C. 781, a date which coincides, according to our reckoning, with neither the first nor the second appearance of John in the Perichorus of Jordan, but with the year in which he was in imprisonment at Machærus. It is necessary, therefore, to consider whether this date of A.D. 14 is correctly assigned or not. Eusebius, in his "Chronicon," had given the year A.D. 13 as the true date of Augustus' death, in fixing upon which he had been guided by the assertion of the accurate Dio Cassius that a *total Eclipse* of the sun had occurred in the year in which that sovereign died. The words of Eusebius, in speaking of the phenomenon, "are, as translated from the Armenian Version, '*Defectio Solis facta, et Augustus mortuus est*[8].'" Dio says expressly "and many portents occurred bearing upon the same point (i. e. the approaching death of the Emperor) neither insignificant in character nor difficult of interpretation; for the sun was *totally* eclipsed, and the greater portion of the heavens appeared as if set on fire[9]." These

[8] Jarvis, Chron. Intr., p. 247.

[9] Τέρατα δὲ ἄρα ἐς τοῦτο φέροντα οὔτε ἐλάχιστα οὔτε δυσξύμβλητα ἐγε-

words are so very precise that it appears impossible to resist their testimony; for the important point upon which the historian insists is the *certain prognostication* of the extinction of the Emperor's life by the total eclipse of the sun. But in the year A.D. 14 there was no such eclipse. In the great work of the Jesuits, "L'Art de verifier les Dates," in the table of eclipses calculated by the able M. Pingrè, there is an eclipse of the sun (*central*) set down for 7 hrs. 30 m., P.M. on the 28th of April, A.D. 13. This eclipse was visible over a small part of *Europe*, to the west and north west, in the 52nd degree of N. L. In the following year there is an eclipse on April 18, at 30 m. after midnight, visible to the N. and N.E. of *Asia* only. The extent of this eclipse is not given. It may be asked, therefore, if there be such an eclipse as that mentioned by Dio Cassius and Eusebius, (and by the latter assigned with perfect correctness, as has been shown, to the year A.D. 13,) how comes it that modern biographers set this testimony aside in favour of the following year? The answer is that modern dates have been arranged according to the system of the learned Jesuit Petavius, who has in this instance, upon what must certainly be deemed wholly insufficient and arbitrary grounds, rejected the Eusebian date. The grounds actually alleged by him are that no eclipse was in that year visible "either at Rome or in any of the provinces of Gaul or Spain. For the true new moon took place at Rome near the twentieth hour, that is, 19 hrs. 49 m. after midnight, on the 28th April, being one hour after sunset. Wherefore, since no eclipse of the sun was

γένητο. ὅ τε γὰρ ἥλιος πᾶς ἐξέλιπε, καὶ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸ πόλυ καίεσθαι ἔδοξε, &c.—Dio Cass. Hist., clvi. 29.

Dio's testimony is the more important upon this point, not merely upon the ground of his general accuracy and trustworthiness, but from his habits of marking periods by astronomical phenomena. Thus in lx. 26 he speaks of an eclipse of the sun happening upon the 37th birthday of Claudius Cæsar, the year A.D. 46.

seen either in that year in which Augustus died [i. e. according to Petavius, 4727 (A.J.P.)] nor in the year preceding, either Dio is false, or some unusual paleness and obscurity of the sun, furnished the spectators with the idea of an eclipse, such as happened, as we have before shown, at the death of Julius Cæsar [1]." The American writer, Dr. Jarvis, from whose pages the outline of the foregoing has been derived, may well call this "a bold and sweeping way of evading testimony, especially of such writers as Dio and Eusebius [2]," and he proceeds with his own refutation, which upon other grounds cannot be admitted here. He calls attention, however, to the fact that neither Eusebius nor Dio had ever asserted that the eclipse was visible at *Rome*, "Wherever seen, by any of the Roman soldiery, in any part of the world, such an event would be spoken of, and the superstitious world would construe it into a prodigy [3]."

There is, however, a collateral circumstance which adds great force to the statement that Augustus died in the year in which a total eclipse of the sun was observed. And that is the account given by both Tacitus and Dio of a revolt which occurred in the army of Pannonia, upon the receipt of the tidings of the Emperor's death. The mutiny occurred in the autumn of the year in which that event occurred. It was checked, just when it appeared to be rising to a crisis, by an eclipse of the moon, the whole circumstances being thus described by the Roman historian Tacitus :—

"The night, which set in *menacing* and threatened to result in crime, was tempered by accident. For (the sky being clear at the time) the moon was seen gradually to undergo obscuration. When however some rising clouds

[1] This peculiar pallor of the sun, which has been frequently observed, may possibly be due to the intervention of a periodic flight of cosmical meteorites intervening between the earth and the sun. In this year (1869) there has been a singular "defectio solis" in this sense, and as matter of fact, some very remarkable meteors have been observed.

[2] P. 246. [3] P. 247.

shrouded her from sight, and it was imagined that she was buried in darkness, they (the troops) began to give way to lamentations, 'the portent meant that their troubles would be continuous, and that the gods were averse from their acts of violence [4].'"

There are two points which, considering the lunar eclipse described to have occurred in the same year with the solar one already mentioned, require consideration. The one is that Tacitus is evidently alluding to the *approach* of night, which threatened to result in crime. The other is the date of the month in which it is to be supposed to have taken place.

Referring then to the self-same tables as before, we find that for the year A.D. 13, there are two eclipses of the moon, one on April 14, the other on the *7th October*, *7 hrs. 45m. p.m.* partial, $3\frac{1}{4}$ digits (or less than one-third of the moon's disc) being obscured. The extent of the eclipse is of little matter, as the rising of the clouds soon entirely withheld the moon's body from sight. In the year 14 A.D., there were also two eclipses of the moon, one in April, as before, the other on *September 27*, total, *at 5 a.m.* If, then, the *hour of the day* be considered, there can be little question (the April eclipses being put out of the question) that the lunar eclipse of October 7, A.D. 13, must be the one intended by the Roman historian, inasmuch as his graphic account would be wholly inapplicable to the other. On this point Dr. Jarvis says that in that part of Pannonia—

"The sun must have set and the moon risen on the 7th of October, about half-past five. The moon was therefore an hour and a half high when the eclipse began. The whole army was up and in action [5]." On the contrary, on the 27th of September, A.D. 14, "The middle of the eclipse was near the dawn, and the moon hidden probably from the soldiery by the surrounding mountains, sunk below the horizon eclipsed [6]."

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[4] "Noctem minacem et in scelus erupturam fors lenivit; nam Luna claro repente cœlo visa languescere: postquam ortæ nubes offecere visui, creditumque conditam tenebris, 'sibi æternum laborem portendi, sua facinora aversari Deos,' lamentabantur."—Tacitus, Annals, i. 28.

[5] Pp. 252, 253.

[6] Id. p. 252.

The coincidence of the two eclipses of A.D. 13, with the requirements of the classical narrations ought, therefore, to leave no doubt as to the true year of the death of Augustus.

The fixing with certainty of the time of this event is to determine one of the most important chronological epochs in ancient history. And in its application to the determination of the several points of Gospel history, its importance cannot be overrated. For if the date of the death of Augustus be known with certainty, that of Tiberius is also known, and with it the limits of the commencement and termination of Pontius Pilate's rule. Again, as Wieseler has shown[7], the fifteenth year of Tiberius is also ascertained, inasmuch as no instance whatever exists of any other mode of reckoning the reigns of Roman Emperors except by the actual accession. If accordingly it be conceded that the object of the third Evangelist in so definitely fixing the time of that call of John the Baptist as he has done in his third chapter was really to fix the ἀρχή of the *public appearance* of Jesus, which dated from the imprisonment of John, the *Terminus à quo* of that event is also distinctly fixed to the imprisonment of John[8].

[7] Pp. 158, 159.

[8] For the arguments in proof that this call of the Baptist was distinct rom that described by the first two Evangelists, and that it is to be referred to the *second* year, not the *first*, of his preaching, the reader is referred to the Chronological Synopsis of Wieseler, p. 177 sqq. : to which reference has already been made.

The chart of dates in the next page, combining those of the Julian period with the years from the building of Rome and of the common reckoning B.C. and A.D. may here be referred to with advantage.

	A.J.P.	A.U.C.	B.C.	
	4701	741	13	
	4702	742	12	
	4703	743	11	
	4704	744	10	
	4705	745	9	**Sabbatical Year.**
	4706	746	8	
	4707	747	7	
	4708	748	6	
	4709	749	5	John and Jesus born.
	4710	750	4	Sun Eclipsed, March 12—13.
	4711	751	3	[Herod dies soon after.
	4712	752	2	**S. Y.**
	4713	753	1	
			A.D.	
	4714	754	1	
	4715	755	2	
	4716	756	3	
	4717	757	4	
	4718	758	5	
	4719	759	6	**S. Y.**
	4720	760	7	
	4721	761	8	
	4722	762	9	
	4723	763	10	
	4724	764	11	
	4725	765	12	**S.** Eclipse of Sun, April. { Augustus dies
	4726	766	13	**Y.** Do. Moon, October 7. { Aug. 19.
	4727	767	14	
	4728	768	15	
	4729	769	16	
	4730	770	17	
	4731	771	18	
	4732	772	19	
	4733	773	20	**S. Y.**
	4734	774	21	
	4735	775	22	
	4736	776	23	
	4737	777	24	
	4738	778	25	
3½ years of Jesus' ministry. ½ year	4739	779	26	John preaches. Jesus baptized.
1st ,,	4740	780	27	**S. Y.**—15th Year of Tiberius. John
2nd ,,	4741	781	28	Jesus begins to preach [imprisoned.
3rd ,,	4742	782	29	in Galilee.
½ ,,	4743	783	30	Jesus crucified Friday, April 5.
	4744	784	31	
	4745	785	32	
	4746	786	33	
	4747	787	34	**S. Y.**
	4748	788	35	
	4749	789	38	Tiberius dies March 16. Recall of
	4750	790	37	Pilate.

Part II.

CHAPTER I.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT FOUR MONTHS[1] FROM THE BEGINNING OF DECEMBER, IN THE YEAR A.D. 27, TO THE CALL OF LEVI PREVIOUS TO THE PASSOVER ON MARCH 29, A.D. 28.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

SECT. 1.—Jesus breaks up His Judæan Ministry and retires to Galilee through Samaria—Visit to Sychem.

SECT. 2.—Return to Cana—Visit to Nazareth, and departure to settle His chief abode in Capernaum.

SECT. 3.—Second call of Andrew and Simon—First general circuit of Galilee—Third call of Andrew and Simon—Second call of James and John—The paralytic man healed—Call of Levi, and banquet at Levi's house.

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. Matt.	S. Mark.	S. Luke.	S. John.
iv. 12	...	...	iv. 1—42
...	...	...	43—54
...	...	iv. 14—31	...
13—17	i. 14—15	...	...
18—22	16—20	...	...
...	21—28	31—37	...
viii. 14—17	29—38	38—43	...
iv. 23—25	39	44	...
v. vi. vii. viii. 1	...	v. 1—11	...
viii. 2— 4	40—45	12—16	...
2— 9	ii. 1—14	17—28	...
...	15—22	29—39	..

[1] See S. John iv. 35.

SECTION I.

ROUTE TO SAMARIA. BEGINNING OF DECEMBER.

"FROM the hills through which the main route of Palestine must always have run .... the traveller descends into a wide plain, the widest and most beautiful of the plains of the Ephraimite mountains, one mass of corn unbroken by boundary or hedge, from the midst of which start up olive-trees, themselves unenclosed as the fields in which they stand[2]."

Along this route Jesus, accompanied by the five disciples of whom note has been already taken, made His way into Samaria. He thus avoided the neighbourhood of Bethabara and the fords of Jericho, where John had been ministering at the time of his arrest by Herod. This was, however, not the immediate reason of His taking this route. The narrative states that "He *must needs* go" this way. The actual reason was, as has been already shown (p. 174), that He was already on the very borders of Samaria, and that it was the natural road to take. Moreover, He would, under the circumstances, not desire to prolong His stay in the neighbourhood where either the Pharisees or Herod exercised their principal sway. From the latter, it is true, He had nothing to fear personally; but it was extremely probable that the same machinations which had already delivered over John upon jealous suspicions might again enlist the fears of Herod against Himself. The Jews, indeed, who had "no dealings with the Samaritans," whom they regarded with the bitterest contempt, were accustomed to take the circuitous route by Peræa, in order to avoid all unnecessary contact with this people. Jesus, however, who afterwards declared that the Son of Man was Lord even of the Sabbath, takes occa-

[2] Stanley's "Sinai," &c., p. 233.

sion of the emergency to show that He was in no way bound by the ordinary prejudices of the nation, but that the demands of His office, as well as the nature of His being, required that He should declare Himself above them, whenever a fitting opportunity offered.

By starting early in the morning and travelling according to Oriental custom, Jesus and His disciples would have reached the vale of Shechem by the evening of the same day. Through narrow gorges in the mountains, and over the summits of more than one steep hill, their path was difficult and laborious, sufficiently fatiguing even for men accustomed to mountain travelling and exposure to the weather; although the mildness of the season (it being winter) relieved them from the scorching heats of the Syrian sun. So at length a little before sunset, crossing "a low ridge which shoots out from Mount Gerizim towards the East[3]," they entered the narrow valley of Shechem, rich in many a tradition and association of the past. On the left towered the Mount of Gerizim to the height of a thousand feet; to the right at a little greater distance rose the antagonistic hill of Ebal. Between the two stretched the beautiful plain where Jacob bought the parcel of ground from Hamor, and where lay also the tomb of the Patriarch Joseph.

VALE OF SHECHEM (NABLOUS). EVENING OF THE SAME DAY.

Fair indeed is that vale of Shechem, enclosed as it is on all sides, where alone in this part of Palestine "glittering violet or purple-coloured hues" tinge the mountain sides "where the light falls next to the long deep shadows; where there is "the shade of foliage along the living waters," and the ear is charmed "by the melody of a host of singing birds," and where crowds of natural springs "pour their treasures into the valley, and have thus secured the perennial glory of its green grassy sward, its

[3] Olin, Travels, vol. ii. p. 339.

olive-groves, its orchards of fig, and vine, and pomegranates[4]." The oaks, which constituted the grove of Moreh, in Abraham's time, "were afterwards superseded by the more useful olive trees, as we see at the present day, so that we may rest assured that, when the Lord Jesus journeyed through Samaria, He must have seen the valley of Shechem in the same condition as that in which we see it now, with the exception only of things built by the hands of men[5]."

To the north-east spreads out the plain of Shechem, now towards the beginning of spring, or at least the close of the Syrian winter, covered with the young corn sprouting up around, and covering the plain with verdure. It was six o'clock in the evening, the time when the females from the village came to draw water, and, wearied with His journey, Jesus sat down on the brink of a well at the very base of Mount Gerizim, while a portion of His disciples went into the village of Sychar to buy food.

The well, upon the brink of which Jesus now sat for rest after His weary journey, lies close to the road which still leads from Jerusalem along the base of Mount Gerizim. The spot itself is clearly identified by the allusion in verse 20; where it is manifestly assigned to the immediate neighbourhood of "this mountain." Up the gorge of the hill to the left hand wound the road which led then (as it does now) to the ancient village of Shechem well known in modern times under its present name of *Nablous*.

The narrative of the Evangelist S. John states that the place of the halt of Jesus was at "a city called Sychar, near to the field which Jacob gave to his son Joseph[6]." By the city are to be here understood, as is general in descriptions of Oriental towns, the environs of the place, and not the actual town itself. The name of the place is commonly known as Shechem;

[4] See Stanley, Sinai, pp. 234, 235.

[5] Van de Velde, i. p. 387.

[6] S. John iv. 5.

but in the N. T. it is designated Sychem, a word which the Evangelist, not without significant reason, changes here into Sychar. The name by which it is described by him denotes the city of "lies," and it appears to have been formed according to that system of *Paronomasia* which prevails in many instances throughout both the O. and N. T. The Samaritans claimed to worship Jehovah, and appealed to their Temple on that very mountain as the evidence of the truth of their worship. Such a claim could never be admitted either by a conscientious Jew, or by Him by whom the covenant had been made with Israel itself. The sole conditions of acceptance were by communion on the part of a heathen with that chosen people whom Jehovah had expressly selected as the depositaries of His Word and Will, and had fenced in with so many precautionary restrictions and privileges. By circumcision alone, and worship in the Temple at Jerusalem, could a Gentile become accepted as a part of the covenant people. To claim part in Him without those conditions was to assert a lie; and the language of Jesus (S. John iv. 22) plainly shows that this was the case. It may be true that the Samaritans received Him when His own people rejected Him; but this fact does not alter the theological relation between the two. The "Name" of Jehovah, and His sanction and protection, were with Israel as a covenant nation, and with none other; and hence Jesus never extended His own ministrations, never suffered His disciples to extend theirs[7], beyond the limits and area of the covenant nation. Israel as a body might reject Him, but it was at the risk of the loss of all that which their fathers had prized as most dear, and which they looked to as exalting them above all the nations of the earth. Samaritans might believe, on the contrary, and be brought by His mercy to a knowledge of the truth; but they were individual cases, affected individually, not

[7] Matt. x. 5.

through the operation of any national grace assured by means of any covenant made by and with Jehovah. Their claims were therefore false and unfounded, and must be rejected accordingly.

Of the five disciples who had been hitherto the constant attendants of Jesus, four, namely Simon and Andrew, Philip and Nathanael, appear to have proceeded to Sychem in quest of provisions; while John remained with Jesus as His immediate individual companion. The well, upon the brink of which Jesus in His weariness now seated Himself, is expressly stated by this disciple and Evangelist to have been "Jacob's well." There is no actual evidence in the O. T. of any well having been dug here by that patriarch, but the circumstances of his history are such as to render such a circumstance exceedingly probable; while there is the strongest possible reason for believing that the well now known as "Jacob's well" in this particular spot is the actual one upon which Jesus now took His seat. In point of fact, this whole plain and neighbourhood were deeply interwoven with the old patriarchal history of Abraham's immediate family and descendants. It was here that that great Father of the Hebrew nation himself had pitched his tent, in "the plain of Moreh," near to "the place of Sichem[8]," when God first called him out of his native Haran. Here Jacob bought the parcel of ground from Hamor which on his death-bed he assigned as a special and additional portion to Joseph. In those days it seems to have been chiefly planted with groves of oak, except where the plain had been reserved by the Israelites for the purposes of pasture. In these days it was planted with olive-trees, and possibly others of a commercial value, while the plain itself was all converted into arable land. The well, as known to modern travellers, has undergone considerable changes; but at no great distance of time it was ascertained to be of the depth of one hundred

[8] Gen. xii. 6,

and fifteen feet, hewn evidently with great labour out of the solid rock. It is a somewhat singular circumstance that such a well should have been dug, and with so much labour and difficulty, in a place abounding, like the immediate neighbourhood of the village of Sychem, with natural springs. The fact rather seems to lead to the belief that such wells were to some extent the charters of landed property, as well as the most certain landmarks. Jacob's reason for constructing the well was probably that he might thus render himself and his people independent of the supplies of water belonging to the native population, should a dispute at any time break out between them which might otherwise place him in a position of difficulty and embarrassment.

Jesus had not long taken His seat upon the rocky ledge which surrounded the mouth of the well, when a woman from the neighbouring village approached with a pitcher and the other apparatus necessary for drawing water from its depths. Jesus requested her to give Him a draught of water. The woman looked at him with surprise. She was not accustomed, nor were any of her country's people, to be addressed in terms of ordinary courtesy by a member of the haughty nation of the Jews. She perceived by His dress and bearing that He was a personage of no common order; and in her amazement she asked how it came to pass that He, as a Jew, could stoop to ask a favour of her who was a woman of Samaria. Jesus did not reply in express terms to the question. He rather seemed to parry it, at the same time that He warned her of the risk she incurred by not perceiving the means which lay within her reach of obtaining a boon of a far higher nature than the poor one which He craved at her hands. "If she knew" (He said) "the gift of God, and who it was" that asked her for water, she would rather have asked the boon of Him, and He would have given her living water.

The words were for the time an enigma to the woman. She had never seen Jesus before, and was for the moment utterly incapable of fathoming His meaning. She looked at Him, and observed that He had with Him no apparatus for drawing water, and the well itself she knew to be deep, before she could reach the surface of the water contained in it; and yet to her ideas Jesus seemed to allude to the secret spring from which the well itself was supplied. What could His language mean? "Was He greater," she asked, "than their father Jacob, which gave them the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?" Again did Jesus put the question by leading the woman's mind gradually away from the material objects upon which it was still harping up to the perception of the spiritual truth He designed to raise up within her. He told her that those who drank of that water of which she was thinking at the moment would thirst again, but whoever would drink of the water which He was willing and able to give should never thirst; but that the water should become itself in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Still beyond measure perplexed at His words the woman, who knew that every day she had several journeys to make in order to fetch her daily supplies, begged of Jesus, in her bewilderment, that He would give her the water of which He spoke, that she might cease to feel thirst, and be relieved of the necessity of coming so far to draw water. Jesus, in reply, desired her to "go, *fetch her husband*, and come" back to Him. The woman honestly replied that she *had no husband*, whereon Jesus at once commended her for the truthfulness of her answer. He told her that she had had five husbands, and that the person with whom she was then living was not her husband at all. "In that," said Jesus, "saidst thou truly."

Upon this part of the conversation Hengstenberg has the following striking remarks:—"By a divine arrangement, the re-

lations of her nation were portrayed in the inferior relations of this woman, and precisely on this account she was chosen by Christ as its representative. She had had five husbands, and he whom she now had was not her husband, not having deigned to connect himself with her in marriage. So with the nation. It had previously been in fivefold spiritual marriage with its idols, and this marriage had been dissolved as frivolously as it had been concluded. The people sued for marriage with Jehovah; but this was denied them, because they did not belong to Israel. The declaration, "Thou hast had five husbands," is in remarkable accordance with 2 Kings xvii. 24, according to which passage the King of Assyria brought colonists from exactly five nations, from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria; and of these five nations each had its peculiar divinity, or, according to the language of the East, its husband [9]."

It does not at once appear why Jesus so suddenly and abruptly diverted the conversation into the channel of the woman's domestic relations. She had asked Him for the gift of the living water, and He replied by desiring her to fetch her husband. The true reason would appear to be that He from the first discerned, under an outward life of irregularity and even sin, the germs of much power of good, and a condition of heart upon which the divine grace had means of working. She had had no *need*, it is to be observed, to come daily to this well to draw water. There were numerous springs, natural springs, nearer to the village than this well of Jacob. But for her this well had a special sanctity. Faulty as her views were of religion, and false as was the system in which she had been reared, there were still the germs of a real piety within her heart, waiting only the true touch of divine warmth to call them into life. And she made her daily pilgrimage to

[9] On S. John, i. 230.

the well, because *for her* it spoke of hallowed associations, and seemed in some way to knit her own inner life to the revelation of a true God.

The woman now found her rising belief confirmed. She was speaking to a prophet, evidently; for none but a prophet could have thus divined the secrets of her life. But she was undecided what to think. She had been brought up to believe that the religion of her own people was the true one, and that the proper place of a local worship (such as that which they had borrowed from the Jewish) was on that mountain at the base of which they were then conversing. The Jews, however, she knew, worshipped on the hill in Jerusalem. She therefore in this way gives utterance to the perplexity of her mind. She thirsts for further light and knowledge, and wishes to be convinced that she may safely trust to One whom she is beginning to look upon as her guide to the way of truth. Jesus tells her in reply that the hour was at hand when all merely local ideas of religion would be done away with, and there would be no question of precedence of one place over another, as in the times when it pleased God to choose one special locality in which, and in no other, men should call upon His Name. He told her that her worship, and that of her people, was false; for that they had no revelation of God made to them as the Jewish nation had. Salvation was appointed to come through the Jews, amongst whom only the knowledge of the true God and His covenant promises were ordained to be preserved. But all local ideas and relations were now to be done away; for God is a *Spirit*, and they that worship Him must worship Him in and by His Spirit, and in the knowledge of His true Revelation.

The woman, who could only partially comprehend the words of Jesus, replied that she knew that the Messias was to come, whose title would be that of the Christ, the Anointed One:

when He came, He would explain all things to them [10]. Jesus replied in words which revealed what He refused to the questions of the Jews, "I, that speak unto thee, AM HE."

It may seem strange at first that Jesus should have spoken so plainly to this Samaritan woman, when He observed such reticence amongst His own countrymen. But it is necessary to observe that "among the Jews, Jesus proceeded cautiously, repressing His Messianic dignity, Matt. xvi. 20; the reason for which, according to John vi. 15, was the political character of the Jewish hope in the Messiah. This reason did not exist among the Samaritans; and if the transaction was a symbolical one, having a prophetic character, the confession of Jesus as the Messiah would necessarily occur in it [1]."

At this moment the four disciples who had been absent on their errand to buy food returned, and were naturally surprised at finding their Master in conversation with a woman of the despised race. It was not customary indeed for any man to enter into conversation with a female in this apparently casual manner; and the difficulty was of course heightened by the nationality of the woman.

The woman, finding that further inquiry was cut short by their sudden arrival, left her pitcher by the side of the well and, thoroughly convinced in her own mind of the true nature of the Person with whom she had been conversing, hastened back into the city to acquaint her countrymen with the extraordinary interview she had just held. The account which she gave of it was coloured by just that amount of exaggeration which denoted the confusion of her mind. She then put it to

[10] "The words ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν πάντα strikingly accord with Deut. xviii. 18 (*He shall speak unto them all that I shall command him*)." In fact, the Samaritans did regard the Messiah as the returning Moses. See Hengstenberg on S. John, i. 240, on the Secret Name, יהוה.

[1] Hengstenberg on S. John, i. 241.

her townsmen, whether a Person who could so reveal the secrets of her past life could be other than the Messiah of whose advent all the country was at that time in daily expectation? The result was that the people of the village came out *en masse* to judge for themselves of the correctness of her supposition; and a moving mass of white woollen cloaks was soon visible from the well of Jacob streaming down the eastern slope of Gerizim, contrasting sharply with the dark green of the olive foliage, and the brighter sheen of the young corn that was now beginning to clothe the rich plain of modern Nablous.

Some little time must have elapsed while the Samaritan woman was occupied with the journey to and from the village of Sychem. The disciples, who had been absent on the quest of provisions, had, as has been seen, meanwhile returned, and were for some little time occupied with the preparation of the food. During this process it would seem that their conversation turned partly upon the cause of their journey from Judæa, and that they expressed themselves, chiefly no doubt out of zeal for the honour of their Master, in somewhat bitter terms regarding the unbelief of the Jews, and the difficulty of the seed of Jesus' words taking root in their hearts. They had sown the seed in the Baptismal work to which men for a time seemed to throng freely enough, but a time of danger had come, and they fell off, and no harvest promised to crown their long and anxious labours. The form of their complaint was perhaps derived from the aspect of the fields of early corn that they saw sprouting all round, and it reminded them, as they were now on the way back to the north, that there were yet four months before the harvest time, when the Feast of Passover would summon them back to the City, whose neighbourhood they had so lately quitted.

By this time the meal was prepared, and they brought it to

Jesus with the affectionate request that He would refresh Himself after the fatigues of His journey. Jesus replied in the same metaphorical strain which He had hitherto used, that He had meat to eat which they knew not of. The disciples, naturally mistaking His meaning, and thinking that perhaps the woman they had observed might have been one of a party who had ministered in their absence to His necessities, looked upon each other, inquiring whether any one had brought their Master any thing to eat. He at once undeceived them by reminding them that His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work: and He guided His words to impart to them a solemn lesson of the shortsightedness and sin of impatience. "Are ye not just saying," He asked, "there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest?" Then directing their glance from the bright green of the newly-clad cornfields to the white dresses of the Samaritans, as they streamed down the hill side on their left[2], He bade them look beyond natural things to spiritual, and to see the approach of the many willing believers, the firstfruits of that harvest which had even now begun. "*Lift up* your eyes," said Jesus, i.e. "raise them from the fields on which they are just now fixed, and look up yonder to

[2] It is well known that the chronology of this period has been thrown into confusion by the supposition that the whitening to the harvest means that at this very moment the fields were filled with standing barley. Upon thi supposition Greswell (ii. 214, iv. 745) determines the period of the visit to Thursday, May 13, when the exigencies of the history certainly fix it to the beginning of December, A.D. 27. The view here taken of the symbolical meaning of the harvest is confirmed by the statement of Olin in his travels (vol. ii. p. 338), where he speaks of a body of Samaritan peasants, dressed in "cloaks of coarse *white woollen*, with a few stripes of red running up and down, over their usual simple dress of a loose cotton shirt. They had red caps upon their heads, bound around with white turbans." "White was esteemed the most appropriate colour for cotton cloth, and purple for the others. On festival days the rich and powerful robed themselves in white cotton, which was considered the most splendid dress."—Jahn, Bibl. Antt., p. 133.

the hill-side, look on the fields there, for they are white already to the harvest[3]." He thus raises their minds from the despondency into which they seem to have fallen to the contemplation of the great result that was approaching in the conversion of the world, of which this first general manifestation was an earnest and a cheering prognostic. The Messiah goes on to warn them that the great harvest itself is not immediately at hand, but yet future; one that will be reaped by them and not by Himself; and He thus early gives the intimation that the work of the ingathering of the believers throughout the world will be reserved for a period subsequent to His own death.

By this time the villagers from Sychem had reached the place where Jesus and His disciples were conversing. Many of them were already convinced, from the testimony of the woman, that He whom they came to see was truly the Messiah: for they, unlike the Jews, expected in Him not a Temporal Prince, in whose glory in point of fact as aliens they could not expect to share:—their ideas being based upon the books of Moses alone, they looked for a Prophet, and a Prophet only, in the expected Redeemer of the world; and such a Person they were prepared to find in Him of whom their townswoman had reported that He had revealed to her the secrets of her past life.

The Samaritans were thus the first to confess what it required an express revelation[4] from heaven to convince an Apostle of,

[3] I cannot here refrain from quoting the following passage from the same work and volume, Olin. p. 328:—"April 27. Passing out of the Damascus gate (of Jerusalem) we took the road which leads from Jerusalem to Nablous, the ancient way from Jerusalem to Samaria. We passed over the broad plain or table-land, mostly covered with small fields of stunted wheat, which was pinched with the drought, and prematurely *whitening to the harvest.*" This refers, indeed, to the plain-land north of Jerusalem, not to the plain of Sychem, but it serves to indicate the time of harvest in Palestine, and the *whiteness* (not yellowness, as insisted upon by some) of the ripening harvest.

[4] Acts x. 11—16.

that Jesus was not only the Messiah, but "*the Saviour of the world*[5]."

The crisis in Jesus' life now approached, when the preliminary preaching of John the Baptist having been brought to a conclusion, it became necessary for Him to take at once and publicly upon Himself the Character and Office of Messiah[6]. The note of time was struck by the unconscious action of Herod Antipas.

SECTION II.

CANA. THE THIRD DAY.

JESUS, at the urgent request of the Samaritans, remained two days in the village of Sychem, at the expiration of which He resumed His journey, and directed His steps to Cana of Galilee, where His mother and family had already for some

[5] The passage on which the Samaritans founded their view of the universality of the Messianic work is, no doubt, as Hengstenberg points out, that in Gen. xlix. 10, for out of the Mosaic Scriptures they could not by their creed seek for any such intimation of the office of Messiah. The same commentator remarks that the expression "Saviour of the World" occurs nowhere else in the New Testament except in 1 John iv. 14, "where it is natural to suppose that John used it in allusion to our text." See Hengstenberg, Gospel of S. John, i. 246.

[6] Throughout the New Testament the ἀρχή of Jesus' ministry is dated from the baptism of John, i.e. not from the baptism of Jesus by John, but from the termination of the Baptismal work of John on his imprisonment by Herod Antipas. This is most ably and conclusively shown by Wieseler, to whose arguments the reader is referred (pp. 147—226).

"In conclusion" (he says) "our interpretation of the words, Βάπτ. Ἰωάνν. is confirmed by the parallel passages in the Acts, and most strikingly by the first passage, in which μετὰ τὸ βάπτ. ὃ ἐκήρυξεν Ἰωάνν. corresponds to ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτ. Ἰωάνν., thus leaving no doubt of the meaning of the latter.—Wieseler, pp. 180, 181.

time, as it would appear, taken up their abode[7]. Here He met with a willing and joyful reception. It was His first appearance in the neighbourhood of His friends since the miracle which He had wrought there twelve months before. Since that event, however, fresh circumstances had arisen to strengthen the belief in His prophetical office, which had first been excited by that wonderful circumstance. The Galilæans had of course been present in great numbers at the Feast of the Passover in Jerusalem where He had done many marvellous works, besides cleansing the court of the Gentiles from the profanation which the rapacity of the priests and their contempt for the proselytes had permitted or induced. This action on His part had naturally given great satisfaction to a people like the Galilæans, who, from their constant intercourse with the neighbouring Gentile population, had come to be looked upon by the Pharisees of the metropolis with nearly equal contempt. Jesus Himself was a countryman of their own; Nazareth had been the dwelling-place of Himself and His parents for many years past. Those, therefore, who had been present at the feast, and had seen His wondrous works there, regarded Him with very different eyes from the inhabitants of the City of the Temple. They were justly proud of Him, and delighted with the severe rebukes which He had administered to the vainglorious Pharisee. On their return, therefore, His fame was rapidly spread throughout Galilee, and public expectation was on the alert regarding the time of His reappearance.

It must not be forgotten that Galilee was at this time a district of extraordinary populousness. It was the manufacturing and agricultural region of Palestine, the very centre of commercial enterprise and life. When once, then, public expectation had been kindled, the tidings of the actual arrival of Jesus would have been disseminated with great rapidity.

[7] See S. John ii. 1; iv. 46.

There was probably no place in which news of this sort would more quickly or certainly be received than Capernaum. It was one of the most opulent and busy of all the thriving towns of Galilee. Situated on the north-western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth, there was a large trade in fishing carried on there, of which the actual centre seems to have been *Bethsaida* (or the House of Fish), a suburb bearing, perhaps, to the residential town somewhat the same relation as the port of Leith does to the city of Edinburgh.

When Jesus reached Cana, it is very evident that He desired those who had hitherto been His constant and faithful attendants to return home for a season, until He should have further need of their services. They had now been absent with Him from home and from their regular business occupations for more than eight months, and it was but natural that matters of a domestic nature should require their present attention. Nathanael (or Bartholomew, as he is from his patronymic generally called) remained, of course, in Cana, which was his birthplace and home. Andrew and Simon returned to Bethsaida with Philip, while John would accompany them as far as Capernaum, where his father Zebedee and his brother James still lived.

There was then living in Capernaum an officer of the household of Herod Antipas[8] whose name is not recorded in the narrative of S. John, which alone touches upon the present circumstance, whose son was at that time dangerously ill of a fever. So severe was the attack that it seems to have baffled all the available medical skill, and the recovery of the youth seemed to all human ideas past hope. At this juncture the

[8] Probably either the Chamberlain, or steward, Chuza, husband of the disciple Joanna (S. Luke viii. 3), or Manaen the foster-brother (Acts xiii. 1) of Herod Antipas. If it were the former we gain a clue to the conversion of Joanna. (See pp. 200, 201.)

nobleman heard of the opportune arrival in Cana of Jesus, of whom he had already heard so much through the medium of popular rumour. He resolved, therefore, as a last hope, where the life of one so near and dear to him was involved, to try whether He who had already amazed and baffled all Jerusalem by His actions could afford him any aid in his dire affliction. He accordingly set out at once for Cana, distant from his own dwelling about twenty or twenty-five miles[9].

He appears to have found Jesus without difficulty. Probably he had already learned from one of the disciples where He was to be found.

His reception was by no means reassuring at first. "Except ye see signs and wonders," said Jesus, "ye will not believe." He was well aware that it was His own reputation for works of wonder that had brought this man to Him; that of real faith there was little in the heart of the nobleman of the Idumæan court. The nobleman had desired that He would go down to the seaside city and heal his son; but Jesus, though not in express terms, declined to do so. His pride must be humbled before the words of Life could make themselves understood within him.

The words of Jesus worked as He had designed. The man accepted the rebuke as deserved. Though his faith was low, still it was faith, and as such it could not be disregarded. "Sir," said the father, "come down," (i. e. to the seaside neighbourhood from the hills of Cana) "come down ere my child die." The cry of suffering and faith prevailed. Jesus made but one more trial of his endurance. He would not go with the nobleman. It was much as when Elisha would not come down to Naaman; it was a trial which was intended to work for good in him in whom it was made. He must be

[9] See below, next page, note 2.

himself in great measure the agent in his own salvation. "Go thy way," said Jesus, "thy son liveth[1]."

The nobleman was quite satisfied. There was that in the tone and bearing and language of Jesus which could not be mistaken. He believed the words which Jesus had spoken, and took his leave with a thankful and a lightened heart.

It was seven o'clock in the evening when Jesus spoke these words. It was too late for a return to Capernaum, and the father remained that night in Cana[2]. On the following morning, as he was on his way back to his own home, he was met by his servants, who brought word that his son was *alive*, from which it may be gathered that he had been on the departure of the father almost at the point of death. The nobleman eagerly inquired at what time his son began to show symptoms of amendment. He was anxious to learn whether the time of his weathering the crisis corresponded at all with the words of Jesus. The servants told him that on the previous evening, *at the hour of seven*, on a sudden the fever had altogether and in a moment departed, leaving the lad in perfectly renovated health. It was the very hour in which Jesus had said to him in Cana, "Thy son liveth." There could be in an honest and well-meaning heart but one result of such evidence of divine power. The nobleman believed himself that Jesus was the Messiah whom Israel expected, and his belief was shared by his whole family and household.

It would be matter of interest to be assured who this "royal officer" was. In the absence of direct assurance upon the subject, it is but natural to believe that he is identical either with Chuza (the husband of Joanna, and Herod's chamberlain),

[1] S. John iv. 50.

[2] Kefr Kenna is quite twenty-five miles from the supposed site of Capernaum, and Kana el Jelil, which seems to be the true site of the Cana of the Gospels, is about twenty miles distant.

or with that Manaen of whom S. Luke takes notice in Acts xiii. 1, as Herod's foster-brother.

S. John is careful to note that this miracle was the *second* which Jesus had ever wrought in this part of the country. Both the miracles of Cana belong to his record, and to his alone. From this time forward he leaves the narrative of the Galilæan ministry of Jesus, with but few exceptions, to the pens of his brother Evangelists and predecessors in the Gospel history.

Jesus now began His preparations for the formal commencement of His own Messianic course. His fame had, as has been seen, already preceded Him into the towns and villages of Galilee; men's minds were alert and alive with expectation, and the baptism of John had done its work in awakening a sense of the corruption of human nature, and the necessity of a complete renewal of the whole inner being of a man. The time had come when the seed which had been sown was to receive the light and warmth of immediate Divinity, which the presence of Messiah Himself alone could confer.

It seems unquestionable that the very first place in which Jesus made His public appearance was the village in which He had been from His earliest years brought up.

According to the custom which He henceforth established for Himself, He chose the Sabbath Day for His first great experiment, and entered the Synagogue of Nazareth.

NAZARETH. JANUARY, A SABBATH DAY.

The ritual of the synagogue consisted at this time mainly of two lessons from the Holy Word, the first being taken out of the Books of Moses[3], and the other (of later addit[illegible] the Prophets. This second lesson was followe[illegible]

[3] Acts xv. 21.

tion of some portion of Scripture (probably belonging to one of these lessons), which constituted the *sermon* of the synagogue.

Jesus, having intimated His wish to address the assembled congregation by standing up amongst them, received from the hands of the sub-deacon, as he might be called, or the "Chazzan" of the synagogue, the roll of the prophetical Book of Isaiah. Unrolling the parchment, He fixed upon the passage in lxi. 1, 2, where, in the version adopted by the Evangelist S. Luke, the words occur (iv. 18, 19)—

> "The Spirit of the Lord (sc. Jehovah) is upon me,
> Because He hath anointed me
> To preach the Gospel (i.e. glad tidings) to the poor.
> He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted,
> To preach deliverance to the captive,
> And recovering of sight to the blind,
> To set at liberty them that are bruised,
> To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Having read aloud the passage, He resumed His seat, according to the custom of a Rabbi about to preach or lecture to a congregation. There was a moment or two of intense expectation before He began to speak. Men fixed their eyes upon Him in wonderment and anxiety. His person and His family were well known to many of those assembled there, but there was a dignity about Him which none could understand; and so they listened while He told them that that day was fulfilled in their hearing the wonderful passage He had just read. It is not to be supposed that the words recorded are all that He read to them, or that His comments were all that are recorded by the Evangelist. Clearly He explained to them what was the true meaning of that great prophet who, in inditing those words, had

[illegible]cribed what the Spirit of Jehovah had directed him

[illegible]nguage of the prophet "announces fully, in the [illegible] of eastern metaphor, the manifold and endless [illegible] (Jesus) was commissioned to offer by His

gospel to the world. The despairing beggar was to be raised up by hope; the humble and hungry to be satisfied with goodness; the broken-hearted were to be comforted and healed; the captive to know where he might find deliverance, and the blind how to recover his sight; the slave of sin, bruised and wounded by the rods of the oppressor, was to be sent away from his bondage in perfect freedom; and for all who would listen was proclaimed a jubilee of joy and praise never to end."

Thus He preached "His first recorded sermon to His own townsfolk at Nazareth. Among the Galilæans they first hear the public proclamation of the Gospel, and have the first offer of its mercies[4]."

As He proceeded, the Nazarenes could not contain their amazement and excitement. Here was a young man who had been for many years resident among them, with few and scanty opportunities of acquiring learning in their humble village, now astounding all minds by the gracious and far-reaching force of His words. They looked upon each other with wonder and perplexity; "Is not this Joseph's son?" was the question uttered on all sides by men who could scarce persuade themselves that in Him Who thus addressed them they beheld the carpenter's son of Nazareth. As they still listened in wonder, Jesus addressed Himself to the thoughts which He perceived were at work within their minds. They had heard of His reception at Capernaum and the honour in which He had been held there in consequence of the work which He had done, and the effect which it had had upon the royal officer and his household; and it appears that there was some latent, if not expressed, dissatisfaction that He had hitherto refrained from attempting to win over His own townsmen by some similar striking exertion of power. To this uneasy and dissatisfied feeling He at once addressed Himself. He told them

[4] Forshall, Preface to S. Mark, pp. xxxiii, xxxiv.

He was well aware that they were disposed to apply to Himself the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself," and to require that He should produce the same effects amongst themselves that He had brought to pass by the influence of His acts and words in Capernaum. Jesus, however, warned them that "no prophet is accepted in his own country," intimating that the course of action which had produced such good effects in Capernaum would fail of success if applied to themselves, owing to the jealousy felt of so humble a being as they imagined Him to be. He reminded them that, in the time of Elijah, during the great famine of three years and a half[5] that prevailed throughout all the land of Israel, there were many Israelitish widows living, but to *none of these* was Elijah commissioned to give aid. The only one to whom he was sent was a poor widow of Zarephath in Sidon, a heathen, and not one of the chosen race. Similarly, although there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the Prophet Elisha, the only one cured by him was Naaman, a Syrian, and therefore also a heathen. So it might be now, He told the Nazarenes. The Providence of God might not authorize Him to extend to them the same course of action which He had pursued at Capernaum. There was faith there which might be wanting here. "There were natural prejudices to be overcome. Would they overcome them? Signs and wonders do not precede faith, but follow it. The widow first made a cake for the prophet. The Syrian washed in Jordan[6]."

[5] This statement, which is repeated by S. James (v. 17) appears at first discordant with that in 1 Kings viii., that the rain fell in the third year. But it would seem that the reckoning is here from Elijah's arrival at Sarepta after the year of drought while he sojourned by the brook Cherith. So think Olshausen and Oosterzee, and Wordsworth agrees with them. "The mention of Naaman's history is the greater reproach to the Jews, because he was at first unbelieving, but afterwards believed, on the expostulation of his servants."—Oosterzee on S. Luke, i. 143.

[6] Forshall, Preface to S. Mark, p. xxxiii.

The effect of these words was as it was afterwards with Paul in Jerusalem, when he declared that the Lord had commanded him to quit his own countrymen and depart to the Gentiles[7]. The whole body of the assemblage, roused to a pitch of jealous fury, heightened by their disdain for the lowly condition of the speaker, started to their feet and, in a tumult of excitement and wrath, laid hands upon Him, to lead Him forth to immediate death.

The village of Nazareth lay upon the sloping side of the hill laid out probably, as was the rule at that time, in terraces for the cultivation of the vine, olive, and fig. The village was *not* therefore upon the summit of a precipice, as was at one time erroneously inferred from the language of the text, but upon the acclivity itself. The precipice whence the Nazarenes sought to cast our Lord was not therefore at the verge of the town. It was one of those abrupt craggy breaks which so constantly occur in hills of the limestone formation, and probably is still to be found at the south-western portion of the hill, near to the original site of the village.

To this spot, in their rage and infatuation, the Nazarenes were blindly hurrying their great fellow-townsman, when they found their infamous purpose suddenly frustrated, and their captive gone from their hands. Jesus, exerting His Divine power, passed unperceived, or at least unimpeded, through the midst of His infatuated opponents, and quitted the home of His childhood to which He had now made in vain the first offer of salvation[8].

[7] Acts xxii. 21, sqq.

[8] On S. Matthew's silence regarding this circumstance, Forshall observes that this Evangelist "writing with special regard to the Galilæans, saw fit to pass over that painful incident. It seems probable that on that occasion our Lord proceeded to Nazareth alone, having parted from His disciples at Cana."—First 12 cc. of S. Matt. (on iv. 13).

CAPERNAUM. A DAY OR TWO LATER.

The place which Jesus now chose for His abode was Capernaum, the great seaside city, in fact the metropolis of the north. Many different reasons probably combined to influence His decision. It was not alone that here was the dwelling of John and his brother James, the former already, and the latter soon about to be, attracted to His following; nor that the neighbouring suburb of Bethsaida also harboured three others of His already attached followers. The conflux of varied populations, partly agricultural, partly seafaring,—the populous character of the entire neighbourhood affording so many and varied opportunities of missionary labour,—the liberal turn of mind which contrasted favourably with the prejudices and exclusiveness of the southern people, and the facilities of movement afforded by the position, may all have had their weight in determining His choice. And lastly the fact that the hardy and honest though somewhat rude character of individuals of the maritime district offered the very material out of which the Apostles, (i. e. missionaries,) of the early Gospel might be formed, perhaps lay at the bottom of all. So down the hilly road Jesus trod back the nine miles that lay between it and the miserable village of His childhood, and took up His residence in Capernaum, where He ever after had his home in the few and rare intervals of labour when He could avail Himself of necessary rest in that part of Palestine.

The site of Capernaum, there can be now but little doubt, is that of the modern Tel-Hum. It stood, according to the language of ancient prophecy, as well as by the testimony of the Evangelist, upon the very borders of the old districts allotted by Joshua to the two tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. The prediction, however, which Jesus uttered against it in conse-

quence of the hardness of heart which was after all evinced in later time, notwithstanding His great and wondrous works wrought therein, was most terribly accomplished.

"It would almost seem as if the woe pronounced against Capernaum had been literally fulfilled, as if the doom of the cities of the southern sea had been visited upon those of the north; as if it had been more tolerable for 'the land of Sodom' in the day of its earthly judgment than for Capernaum[9]."

The Evangelist S. Matthew sees nothing accidental in the choice of this very locality, but, on the contrary, "he sees in it the fulfilment of a prophecy of Isaiah[1]" (ix. 1, 2).

> "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
> The tract of the sea beyond Jordan,
> Galilee of the nations,
> The people that walked in darkness
> Behold a great light,
> And to them which sat in the region and shadow of death,
> Light is sprung up[2]."

"This prophecy is admirably fitted to strengthen the gratitude of the believing Galilæans for the inestimable blessings of the Gospel, and to suggest the means of awakening in the minds of their unbelieving countrymen a sense of the marvellous displays of power and goodness which had been so signally displayed to that benighted land. Christian commentators are apt to limit too strictly their view of the inspired quotations to the particular words adduced. It is often expedient to take into consideration the context, remembering that the pious Jew was habitually trained to the repetition of passages from Scripture, and found in a few words a suggestion to many which followed. In this passage from Isaiah he would

[9] Stanley's "Sinai," &c., p. 384.
[1] Olshausen, i. p. 197.
[2] See also Henderson's "Isaiah," p. 77.

scarcely stay until he reached the end, at verse 7, of that magnificent paragraph which told the super-eminent dignity and glories of Messiah[2]."

There can be no question whatever that the prophecy was directed to, and found its accomplishment in, the residence of Jesus by the Sea of Galilee, where for the remainder of His course His chief ministrations lay. The expression, "Land of Zebulun and Nepthalim;" no doubt denotes the *Eastern*, as that "Beyond Jordan" describes the *North Western*, border of the lake; and here on both sides we find that Jesus did constantly exercise His mission.

The "darkness" in which these people had so long sat had perhaps reference (1) to their distance from the centre of religious development in Jerusalem, and (2) to the admixture of the Gentile population amongst them in their towns and villages. The contrast between "darkness and light" here drawn by Isaiah has its correlative in the language of S. John i. 5.

It is certainly the natural inference from the Gospel narrative that Jesus would have chosen Nazareth as His actual home, had it not been for the obstinate infidelity of its inhabitants. It became therefore necessary, on His rejection from His natural home, to choose some other place which must satisfy at least equally well the exigencies of prophetic designation. And such was Capernaum, which offered many natural advantages which Nazareth could never have supplied. It lay exactly as indicated by the prophet Isaiah: the people were not indisposed to welcome Him, for it was there that He had already wrought the miracle upon the son of one of their most influential townspeople; there, or in the immediate neighbourhood of Bethsaida, at least four, if not more, of His immediate Apostles had their abode; and, finally, its peculiar position upon the edge of the lake offered signal facilities for

[2] Forshall, First 12 cc. of S. Matt. (on iv. 14).

His ministerial career, in the number and variety of persons with whom He brought Himself in contact: while it afforded Him that ready means of extrication from the importunities of the populace, or from the persecution of the Pharisees, of which He frequently availed Himself in after times.

From this time forth Jesus began that missionary work of the Messiah, which, linking itself on to the ministry of John the Baptist, took for its basis the Elijah-work of preaching repentance because of the immediate advent of the Kingdom of Heaven.

During the interval which elapsed between the return from Nazareth and the following Sabbath, Jesus remained quietly at Capernaum, waiting for the return of that day to make His first appearance as a Teacher in that city.

SHORE OF THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

In preparation for His work Jesus again sought the companionship of certain who believed upon Him, in order to carry out the ministrations to His own office and Person which would be necessitated by His own engrossing labours. It was on one of the days of that week, the Friday or the Thursday evening, that He went down on to the pebbly beach of the lake, to look for those whom He required to help Him in the work He had to do. There He found two of those who had lately been relieved of their attendance upon Him, Simon and Andrew, now returned to their original calling, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen of Bethsaida. Calling to them Jesus desired them to relinquish for the present their occupation of catching fish, promising them that He would furnish them with a nobler prey in the shape of men. At the summons of the well-known voice, the brothers immediately relinquished their occupation, and took their places as attendants in His rear. Passing onwards to a little distance, they

came upon another of the little band who had lately been with Him in the baptismal work in Judæa. This was *John*, who, with Andrew, had first followed Jesus upon hearing the declaration of his former master, John the Baptist. He was at that moment sitting in one of their fishing-vessels, which was drawn up upon the shore, together with his brother James and his father Zebedee engaged, with the assistance of some hired mariners of the neighbourhood, in mending their nets for the coming fishing season. To both the brothers He now addressed His summons. John had of course imparted both to father and brother all that had previously taken place with regard to his own discipleship. With the permission, therefore, of their father Zebedee, both John and James (the latter now for the first time) immediately desisted from their labours, and left their places to be supplied by the paid crew of fishermen, while they again for a period, of which they did not as yet know the precise duration, prepared to enter upon the service of their Master.

SYNAGOGUE OF CAPERNAUM: THE SABBATH DAY.

On the following Sabbath, Jesus, with His four attendants as witnesses of His work, entered the Synagogue of Capernaum; and, as He had done at Nazareth, delivered an address explanatory of the meaning of the Old Testament prophets in reference to the approaching Kingdom of God. The whole assembly, free from those local prejudices and passions which in His own city had but a few days before threatened His life, heard Him with wonder and respect. For His teaching was not like that of the ordinary Scribes and Doctors of the law. *They* spoke as expounders merely of that which had been delivered to them by Moses; and their teaching was too often overlaid with traditions of men, which they taught in place of the doctrines of Jehovah. Jesus spoke not merely as an expounder, but as the Giver, of the Law, as One who had authority given to Him to

preach, and to set forth to all what was the true meaning of that defaced and mutilated word which was presented to a corrupt and degraded Israel. That word, too, He confirmed with power, by giving visible evidence, in the miraculous cures performed upon the *bodies* of men, of His power to heal their *souls*. It was no wonder that men were astonished at His doctrine. It was to them a new life from the dead. They listened for the first time to One who made religion a thing of life, and not of washings, and shibboleths, of hairsplit things, and empty formality. For the first time, the dry bones of the law of Moses were clothed with the full garb of the living body, and the Spirit of the Sinaitic utterances was breathed again into what to them had long been but a dead and speechless form.

In the Synagogue of Capernaum it happened that there was, among the Congregation on this Sabbath Day, a man possessed by an unclean spirit. For some little time the sufferer seems to have sat a silent and passive listener to the words of Jesus. But at length, unable to bear the terrible contiguity of the majesty of Heaven, the wretched man cried out, under the influence of the demon, "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou Art; the Holy One of God[4]!" Ever since the Temptation, the tidings of the victory of the Son of God had run through the world of spirits; and in despair they struggled to the last against the irresistible power which they knew and felt to be pressing upon them. It is observable that, in most instances, the Demons bear testimony that Jesus was "*the Holy One of God*;" but the object may well be conceived to have been that of exciting against Him the jealousy and malignity of those who had the power, and eventually the will, to destroy Him. Jesus, however, would never accept the testimony of these unclean beings. It is a matter of observation,

[4] Mark i. 24. Luke iv. 34.

too, that on very many occasions He shrinks from notoriety, manifestly because it interfered with His own merciful designs. To force His claims upon the recognition of men by other means than the persuasion which naturally followed upon the evidence offered by His marvellous works, was no part of the Gospel scheme. Jesus therefore sternly rebuked the unclean spirit, and bade him quit the prey he had usurped. "Hold thy peace," said Jesus, "and come out of him." As the words fell upon the hearing of the demon, with a loud cry and in a violent paroxysm of the possessed man, who in the parting struggle was thrown into the midst of the assembled crowd of spectators, the unclean spirit quitted its human habitation.

It was doubtless a fearful spectacle, and one that must have been altogether new to the people. In amazement and awe they asked one of the other, "What thing is this? what new doctrine? what word is this? For with authority and power commandeth He even the unclean spirits, and they do obey Him[5]!"

The rumour of this stupendous work of power spread with lightning rapidity throughout the whole of the northern country, and must have contributed greatly to the excitement which already had begun to prevail in the neighbourhood, owing to the recent miracle upon the nobleman's son.

At the conclusion of His address, Jesus quitted the synagogue in company with His four disciples, and entered the house where Simon and Andrew lived. Simon himself was married; and his wife appears afterwards as certainly accompanying her husband in his apostolic travels[6]. It may be inferred, therefore, that she formed one of that company of faithful women, who

[5] Mark i. 27. Luke iv. 36.
[6] 1 Cor. ix. 5.

are mentioned as following in attendance on Jesus, and ministering during His missionary labours to His wants [7]. At this time, her mother was lying in the house sick of one of those violent fevers which seem to have been so very prevalent in this part of the country. It was a fitting case for which to request the aid of the Great Master's beneficent power, so recently and so strikingly manifested. As soon as He was informed of the need of His aid, Jesus complied with the request of faith and love; and entering into the sick woman's room, accompanied by His disciples, He rebuked the fever, took her by the hand, and raised her up from the bed of suffering, free from the very smallest taint of the burning fever that had just been raging in her veins. The moment the woman recovered herself, and felt in her frame the glow of renovated health and strength, she devoted herself in humble gratitude to minister to the wants of Him who had bestowed upon her that wondrous blessing of health, and of those who had been her interposers with Him.

The very common recurrence of fever in the Gospel narratives, especially in this neighbourhood, suggests the belief that the prevalent form of it was a kind of severe ague generated in the marshy lands around the lake districts of Palestine. "In the summer or late spring," says Stanley (p. 371, new ed.), "all travellers speak of the oppressive heat, as they sink below the bracing atmosphere of the hills of Galilee, into the deep basin of the Jordan Lake." This is no doubt due in part to the volcanic nature of this region.

It is well worthy of observation that S. Luke, himself a physician, and a man of education and habits of close observation, is the only one of the three Synoptists who notices the

that Jesus *first rebuked* the fever. He, no doubt, received nformation directly from S. Peter himself.

[7] Luke viii. 23.

EVENING OF THE SABBATH DAY, AFTER 6 P.M.

The sun was now setting, and, as the light began to fade, the Sabbath came to a close. All therefore in the neighbourhood who had heard of the events of the morning began to throng the door of the house where He was. All who had friends or relatives sick with any kind of illness brought their patients to entreat the aid of this Great Physician, whose power no evil thing seemed able to withstand. At that door were gathered together all kinds of diseases and sicknesses, mingled with many a sufferer from that awful possession of the agents of the kingdom of Satan. They had not come in vain. Ever ready to hear the prayer of faith, forth from the house came the Lord of Life, and passing into the dense throng of wretchedness and suffering laid His healing hands upon all who came for aid; and at His touch the whole legion of evil things passed away out of that little world of human nature into the region of darkness and despair.

As in the former case, the demons, as they quitted their usurped habitations, vented their despairing agony in cries; and loudly proclaimed that He who thus tormented them was "Christ the Son of God." Once for all Jesus imposed upon them His commands that they should keep silence upon a subject upon which they of necessity believed, while they trembled.

THE HILL COUNTRY ABOUT CAPERNAUM. EARLY MORNING.

Very early on the following morning, long before it could be called day according to the dawn, Jesus rose; and in order to ensure the privacy which would be denied Him so soon as the city was astir, retired into the country in the heights above Capernaum, where He could be free for purposes of commune with God. When day broke, it became clear that He had not retired before it was necessary; for the house was soon be-

sieged, as it had been the evening before, by the crowds who sought instruction and aid from His presence. On discovering His absence, Simon and the other apostles, unable otherwise to appease the anxiety of the multitude, went in quest of their Master, and told Him that all the people of the place were in search after Him. But the crowds had followed in their steps; and, on finding Jesus, they earnestly entreated that He would not quit their city. But He told them that it was part of His business, and of the object of His mission, to preach the Kingdom of God to the other towns of Galilee, as well as in Capernaum; and He desired the four disciples to accompany Him into the towns which lay immediately adjacent to their own.

It would appear that He for the present restricted the companionship of the disciples to the district where they were themselves personally known: for, upon His own return to the city, they had manifestly been separated again from Him for some little time. He had not yet, it must be remembered, gifted any of them with the *apostolic office*. They were merely called by Him to be His personal attendants, on certain occasions, and for special purposes. When these were accomplished, they returned to their ordinary occupations, until the time later on when He chose the twelve, and invested them with a permanent commission.

FIRST CIRCUIT OF GALILEE. END OF JANUARY TO BEGINNING OF MARCH.

He then commenced alone His FIRST CIRCUIT of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues of the different towns and villages upon the Sabbath days, and healing, wherever He went, all manner of sickness and disease amongst the people. His fame rapidly spread from the district of Galilee itself, through-

out all that northern tract of country called by the Evangelist[8] *Syria*, including the old territory of Phœnicia, with its great maritime and commercial cities of Tyre and Sidon.

As he returned to the neighbourhood of what must now be looked upon as "His own city," He was followed by excited and anxious crowds composed of persons out of every district in the whole of the country included under the names of Palestine and Peræa. The Evangelist speaks in fact of great multitudes of people following Him, "from Galilee and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judæa, and from beyond Jordan" (S. Matthew iv. 25). It is impossible to assign the exact limits of these districts, but they seem to comprise every part of the Holy Land with the exception of Samaria—Galilee and Decapolis occupying the northern part, Judæa and Peræa the southern.

Bringing therefore His first mission to a close, He retired now to His own neighbourhood, where the most convenient locality was to be found for the purpose which He had in contemplation to execute.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

The Evangelist Matthew, who records the Sermon on the Mount, has inserted it in his Gospel evidently out of its strict chronological position. Nor is it difficult to see his reason for so doing, when once the principles upon which his Gospel is constructed are understood. He had alluded in c. iv. 23—25 to the multitudes who had followed Jesus, and the fame which

[8] On S. Matt. iv. 23, Forshall observes that "no unprejudiced person can doubt that this circuit is the same with that described Mark i. 39, and Luke iv. 44. Clearly in all these Evangelists the circuit mentioned is the first undertaken in Galilee."—First 12 cc. of S. Matt.

had gone out throughout all Syria of His wonderful words and works. He now proceeds to give examples of both; first, in the great Sermon on the Mount, which is preserved by himself alone; and, secondly, in the group of twelve specified miracles, comprising every variety of superhuman energy on the part of Jesus, which he subjoins, equally out of chronological order, at the conclusion.

It would not be proper to the plan of this work to enter upon any homiletical exposition of the great Sermon. It will be enough to call attention to its structure and arrangement, and to notice some of the salient points in which the doctrines of Christianity impinge upon the precepts of the Mosaic Law.

The Sermon was evidently delivered in answer to the importunities of the people. They desired to learn what new truths this Great Master would teach them; and there were many among them who longed for something more real, more spiritual, more consoling than they were wont to obtain from the lifeless expositions of the Scribes and Doctors of the Jewish Law. The words of Jesus may therefore be taken as a summary of the *principles* of Christian conduct, derived from a sincere, unaffected love to God, as contrasted with those precepts of the Mosaic Law which, albeit wise and good in themselves, were adapted to an early stage of society, and rigidly embodied, because the people at the time could bear no heavier, and Moses (speaking by God's direction to the chosen race) could impose no lighter, yoke upon their conduct and their consciences.

The whole Sermon is naturally divisible into *fifteen sections*, the first three of which relate to the mutual connexion between His disciples and Himself in His character as a teacher come from God. The next group of five bear upon the two chief commandments which touched the well-being of society at the time, and upon certain common exhibitions of a low

morality, which He pointed out as indispensably necessary to be overcome and done away with by all who professed a desire to follow Him, and serve God in holiness and truth.

Passing on then, in the next four, to the inculcation of the desire of the glory of God as the true motive of the Christian disciple, He earnestly warns His hearers against indulgence in their own vainglory, as exhibited in almsgiving, praying, and fasting; and He gives them His own praying, both as a form for their own use, and as a guide and pattern by and upon which to frame their own petitions.

Lastly, bidding them to lay by all censoriousness, and avoid indiscreet and injudicious use of their knowledge in intercourse with others, He desires them, in the last three sections, to do to their neighbours as they would wish themselves done by, to labour diligently after the acquisition of eternal life, to avoid all false teachers, who may readily be known and detected by their fruits; and by practice, not mere profession, to evince the true character of Christians; bearing in mind that the true test of their belief, as well as the only way to salvation, is *obedience.*

These groups with their divisions will stand as follows:—

I.	c. V.	vv. 3—12
	,,	13—16
	,,	17—20
II.	,,	21—26
	,,	27—32
	,,	33—37
	,,	38—42
	,,	43—48
III.	c. VI.	vv. 1—4
	,,	5—15
	,,	16—18
	,,	19—24
IV.	c. VII.	vv. 1—12
	,,	13—20
	,,	21—29

The Lord brought His great discourse to a conclusion

amidst the profound amazement and emotion of His numerous hearers. Nothing of the kind had ever been heard before. Instead of the formal disquisitions and stereotyped expositions of Scribes and Pharisees, there was a life, a truth, a power in the words of the gracious Teacher which went home to the hearts of all. He spoke, as they said, like one having authority, and not as the Scribes.

Before quitting this subject for the continuation of the regular history, it is necessary to consider the question whether this Sermon is, or is not, only a fuller and more complete record of that which S. Luke has preserved in chap. vi. 20—49. The full examination of the question would involve too great an interference with the plan of this work. It will be enough here simply to point out certain peculiarities attaching to each, which mark them unmistakably as belonging altogether to two different occasions.

There is however so much that is common to both discourses, that it may be desirable to show that such resemblance constitutes of itself no grounds for assuming identity between the two.

"Our blessed Lord's ministry lasted nearly three years. For the greater part of this period He was continually employed in teaching and preaching. It was His daily occupation. He had no other, save that of healing sicknesses and relieving infirmities. During such a period He must have addressed the people in various parts of the country many hundred times. Those whom He instructed had much the same ignorances and the same spiritual necessities. They required the same teaching. The first principles of religion and morality had to be enforced. No other than the plainest language and most simple arrangement of thoughts would have accomplished that which was needed by the people. How was it possible that the same primary truths could have been fitly taught on so many occasions in any other way than by using sometimes the same words and in the same mode? Nay, how so effectively as by their frequent use . . . . .

To proceed, however, with the proposed comparison of the Sermon on the Mount and that delivered after the ordination of the Apostles.

The whole matter in the former considerably exceeds that in the latter. The proportion is as ten to three, so that there is more than three times as

much matter in the one as in the other. Supposing therefore the sermons the same, and the *whole* matter of the shorter to be contained in the other, St Luke must have cut out more than two-thirds of the discourse. When, however, we look into St. Luke's sermon we find not a little for which we search in vain in St. Matthew's. Fully a fifth part of St. Luke's is not there, so that of the whole matter contained in the two accounts less than one-fifth is common, and more than four-fifths peculiar to one or the other[9]."

SECTION III.

BORDERS OF THE SEA OF TIBERIAS. BEGINNING OF MARCH, A.D. 28.

AT the close of the great Sermon on the Mount, as He descended the slope of the hill, Jesus was followed by an immense multitude of the people, whose thirst for divine teaching, instead of being assuaged, had been even increased by the wonderful and, to them, novel truths they had been listening to. His way lay down to Capernaum, where it seems from the narrative that He would have sought rest and repose after the long and fatiguing labours He had undergone, but that the pressure of the eager and excited crowds rendered it hopeless for Him to find shelter even in His own home. He accordingly bent his steps farther on down to the slope of the beach, where He might expect to find one of the fishing parties of His own already-made disciples from whom He could meet with assistance and attendance. One of the boats happened to be close to the shore, if not already drawn up upon it, which belonged to the brothers Simon and Andrew. The other seems to have been not far off, containing John and James, the sons of Zebedee, who are now stated to have been partners with the other pair of brothers in the fishery. The fishermen had

[9] From Forshall's First 12 cc. of S. Matthew, where the whole question is ably and exhaustively discussed, pp. 64, 65.

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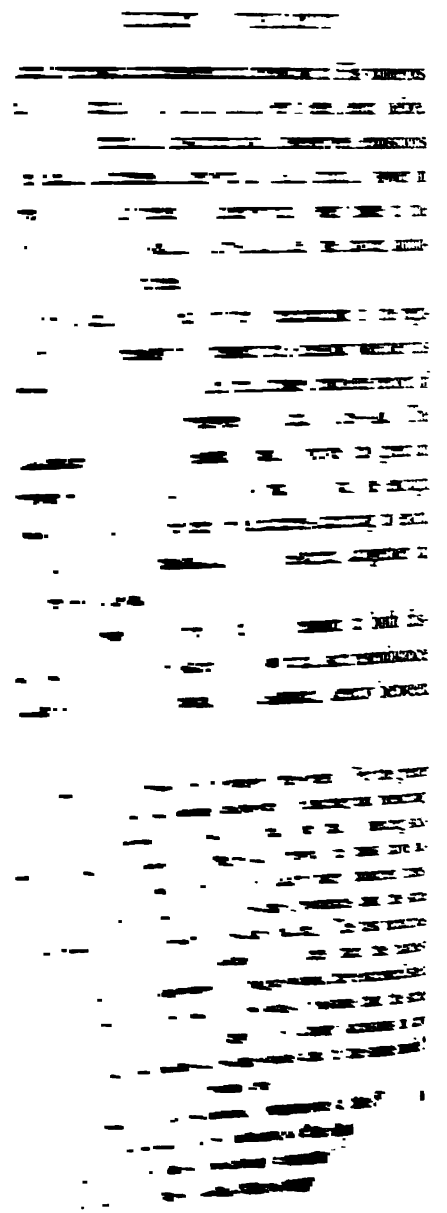

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[9] F[illegible] 12 cc. of S. Matthew, where the whole ably: [illegible]ssed, pp. 64, 65.

quitted their boats, which were (as has been already said) drawn up upon the beach; and were washing their nets, as fishermen do, of the weeds, shell-fish, and molluscs, which in the course of trawling become entangled in the meshes. As the people pressed upon Him in their unthinking ardour, rendering any standing-place, whence He could be heard, impossible upon the shingly beach, Jesus entered one of these vessels, which was Simon's, and requested of him that he would push out a little way from the shore. This was, as may be readily imagined, immediately done, and what may be called the adjourned meeting was addressed by the gracious Master from this extemporized platform.

At the conclusion of the address, Jesus desired Simon to take his vessel out on to the lake into the deep waters where the fish lay, and to let down his nets for a draught. Now it happened that both vessels had been out the whole of the previous night (the chief time of fishing) and had taken nothing whatever.

Jesus bade these simple men "launch out into the deep, and let down their nets for a draught."

It is perhaps not to be wondered at, under the circumstances, that Simon, though he did not hesitate for one moment to obey the injunction of One whom He had already learned to love, and in so many things to obey, yet ventured to give expression to his belief that the endeavour would be unsuccessful, even at the moment that he prepared to do the bidding of His Master. He could not of course have anticipated the result. The net covered a shoal so enormous that, in attempting to draw it in, it broke; and finding the weight altogether beyond their own powers, they were obliged to beckon to their partners John and James, who had seemingly accompanied them at no great distance, to come and help them.

Why did Simon *beckon*, and not *call* to his partners? is a

question which has been sometimes asked, and perhaps not unfairly, for the Evangelists write nothing without a reason. The reason seems to be from what follows, that he was, as we say, *struck dumb* with amazement, that he literally had not words to express what was at the moment uppermost in his mind. The partners came, and by the united strength of all the nets were drawn in. But the wonder was not yet over. The amount of fish captured was so enormous, the weight so extraordinary, that, as the huge mass was hauled in, the gunwales of the vessels heeled over so that the water poured in, and the boats were in danger of sinking.

It is perfectly clear that there was here something which had never been known in all the experience of the fishing life of all the persons concerned. To mark out the exact spot where fish might be surely caught, might be of itself a simple coincidence; a large catch might partake of the same nature. But what had actually happened was manifestly something so utterly out of the way, so completely out of and beyond the range of the experience of all, something suggesting so plainly and so distinctly that the fish had been *brought* to the net by the will of Jesus, that the impression made upon the mind of the fishermen was instantaneous, uniform, and overwhelming.

Perhaps (thinks one before quoted) Peter had begun to feel his own shortcomings, and unfitness for the great office to which he had been lately called. "Perhaps, during the Sermon he felt them more acutely; the miracle cut him to the quick. The sense of his utter unworthiness of such a Master overcame him. He threw himself upon his knees, and in the agitation of his feelings begged our Lord to depart, and leave him to himself and his remorse[1]."

Jesus listened to the words of Peter; it was best that the burdened heart of that energetic disciple should first find its vent

[1] Forshall, First 12 cc. of S. Matthew, p. 33.

in words; and then, in tones which intimated the truth of Simon's belief, and conveyed a reassurance of hope for the future, bade him "fear not, for from henceforth he should catch men[2]."

On their return to land, the fishermen relinquished their trade altogether, leaving it however (as there seems reason to believe)[3] in charge of persons appointed to manage it in their absence; and now began to follow Jesus, as regular attendants, until the time when they were solemnly set apart by Him for a distinct Apostolic office.

The period of the next occurrence which (apparently because it was the first of its kind, as well as because it referred to one of the most frightful disorders which infested the land, and was indeed known to be by ordinary means incurable) is related by all the three Synoptists, is not marked out in any way with certainty. Neither is it possible to define the exact place where this great miracle was performed. All that is stated is that Jesus had gone into a certain city, when a man full of that most fearful of all the disorders with which the human frame is afflicted, leprosy, came into His presence, and falling on his face before Him, in token of deepest reverence, exclaimed declaring his full and perfect faith that, if it were the pleasure of Jesus, He could heal him of his horrible malady. Jesus looked upon the sufferer with that infinite compassion with which the truly pure can always look upon the impure, and without a moment's hesitation replied that it *was* His pleasure to do that which the prayer of faith had asked. It is to be observed that the man had not requested Jesus to lay His hand upon him. To *touch a leper* was actually forbidden by the Mosaic Law: but Jesus, showing by His action that to the pure all things are pure, and that defilement comes to a man not from without

[2] S. Luke v. 10.

[3] See below, in loco.

but from within, put forth His hand, and touched him saying, "I will! be thou clean."

At that very moment the leprosy vanished from his flesh. Impurity could not withstand the touch of Jesus.

As soon as the man saw and felt that he was cleansed from that most awful of all bodily disorders, Jesus laid His strictest command upon him that he should keep perfect silence upon the subject of the cure, until he should have presented himself to the Priest, and offered the customary oblation [4], according to the Levitical Law, in thankfulness for his recovery.

The man, however, on quitting His presence, could not contain his joy and wonder. He rushed into the city, spreading abroad every where the tidings of his marvellous cure; so that, owing to the increased excitement of the neighbourhood, Jesus was absolutely debarred from the comforts of a temporary home, and was obliged to confine Himself to the open country in the outskirts of the city. Even there He was beset by multitudes who came to hear Him preach to them the word of God, and to be healed of the infirmities from which they suffered.

In this quiet and uninhabited district called in A. V. "the wilderness," as opposed to the inhabited villages and towns, Jesus found His chief opportunities of prayer to the Father.

That there were good reasons for this retirement of Jesus, supposing that He desired to be unmolested for a time, is sufficiently proved by what happened immediately upon His return to His own home. He had scarcely reached His dwelling, when the rumour was spread abroad by some who had observed His return, that He was now once more to be found at home. The consequence was that an immense concourse of people assembled at the house, thronging and pressing upon

[4] See Lev. xiv. 10, sqq.

the entrance to constrain Him to preach the word to them. Amongst the concourse were to be seen Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, who had been attracted by the fame of what they had heard of Him out of not only every town of Galilee, but even from Judæa and Jerusalem. S. Luke especially remarks (v. 17) that "the power of the Lord was present to heal them." This power, according to the phraseology of this Evangelist, was that of the *Father*[5] working through the Son; and it is as well that it should be here noticed according to His intention.

It is necessary, in order to form any thing like a graphic idea of the miracle now following, that the reader should understand something of the structure of an ordinary Eastern house. To say that it is totally unlike any English or European home in general is but a wide statement of the difference. The Eastern house presents to the street little more than a dead wall pierced by a low door, and possibly, where there are upper chambers, by one or two latticed windows. The habitable rooms front upon an inner quadrangle which, in the case of mansions belonging to the wealthier classes, may afford an entrance into one or even two more beyond. The main chambers, which are placed upon what may be termed the first floor above the kitchen and other usual domestic offices, open upon a kind of cloistered gallery, the intervals between the piers of the arches opening down upon the court below. From the corner of the court a flight of stone steps leads up to this covered gallery, while another and a smaller one conducts to the house-top. Near to the entrance, however, upon the outside of the building, there is also usually another staircase which, without any communication with the interior, leads to the house-top and along the roofs of all other houses which are built contiguously with it. The roofs are flat, "formed by layers of branches, twigs, matting, and earth laid over the

[5] Oosterzee, i. p. 169.

rafters and trodden down[6];" in the present case it seems that tiling had either taken the place of the earth, or had been laid first over the rafters, instead of the branches of trees, and then the earth laid upon that[7].

CAPERNAUM. HOUSE OF SIMON AND PETER.

Jesus was now in His own home, which was beset, as has been represented, by a vast crowd of people. Amongst those who sought to avail themselves of His power to heal were the friends of an unfortunate man who had been for some time afflicted with the terrible disorder of *paralysis*. In such cases the brain has lost its power to control the muscular action of the body. The limbs are either nerveless and powerless to assist the bodily functions, or are accompanied by a distressing movement irrespective and independent altogether of the will of the patient. The disease is in either case incurable by all human and ordinary means. On hearing of the return of Jesus, the friends of the sick man, carrying the invalid upon his couch, proceeded to His dwelling. On their arrival, the crowd around the outer entrance was so dense that it was hopeless to attempt to gain audience of Him in the ordinary way. But such was the determination of the party, and such their perfect faith in the power of Jesus to fulfil their desire, that they resorted to an expedient which has certainly no parallel in the Gospel narrative.

They bethought themselves of the stairs or ladder leading up to the house-top. Hoisting up the invalid to the roof, they would find it not difficult to ascertain the exact position of Jesus in the large upper room beneath, or in the gallery itself, over which the roof ran[8]. The inner court itself, it is

[6] Kitto's Cyclop., vol. ii. p. 877, 878. [7] See Oosterzee, p. 169.

[8] "Hug (p. 22) shows that this might be done without danger. Even if [illegible] side staircase to the house where Jesus was, access might

probable, was not covered in, but exposed to the air; and the roof would extend as a terrace-walk over the portions occupied by the surrounding galleries. They would perceive thus the position of Jesus exactly, and would without difficulty mark the spot just over and in front of Him as He stood. The chief difficulty in the narrative is the breaking up of the roof, especially as S. Luke expressly mentions the passage being made "through the tiling;" and S. Mark speaks of their having "broken up" the roof, a process which to modern ideas seems unjustifiable. The house, however, at which the occurrence took place was, it must be remembered, the property of persons in a comparatively humble position in life. Now the inferior classes of buildings were in most cases constructed of what is in our English county of Devonshire called "cob," that is, dried mud, mixed with straw to give it consistency, and baked in the sun. The outer walls, in fact, of most houses were formed of this material, which could be very easily "broken through," and again perfectly repaired with but little inconvenience to the tenant.

Breaking up, therefore, the light "tiling," and removing the layers of twigs and earth, they lowered the sick man by ropes upon his bed down amongst the people in front of where Jesus was standing. They had not miscalculated the view which He would take of their conduct. It had been dictated at once by strong natural affection to the relative whose case they thus so singularly brought before Him, and also by the most undoubting faith on the part of the whole five in His power and will to accede to their implied petition.

Their faith met with its reward. Jesus, looking upon the man, who in his strange position lay with helpless limbs and

be obtained to it over the roof of another. An opening in the roof exactly over the spot where Jesus was is the less improbable, since it was by this way that the dead were often carried out of the houses."—Oosterzee, i. 169.

upturned eyes, anxiously scanning the countenance of his expected Saviour, said, "Son," (the common but endearing appellation bestowed upon the inferior by the superior in the East) "son, thy sins are forgiven thee!" He was addressing Himself at the moment to the inner consciousness of the patient, and no doubt recalling to his mind the original cause of the sickness under which he was now suffering.

It may be not difficult to divine one reason for this peculiar mode of treatment by the Great Physician. His marvellous acts and teaching had attracted immense crowds of persons from all parts of the country, amongst whom on the present occasion were many Scribes and Pharisees attracted in great measure by an intense curiosity no doubt, but, with the usual scepticism of their body, anxious rather to disprove the claims, or disparage the source of the power of Jesus, than honestly to admit what they could not deny, and to ascribe His power to the only source which could be reconciled with His teaching.

The mode which Jesus adopted, therefore, in addressing Himself to the inward and spiritual nature of the paralytic man was a direct challenge to the hostile and malignant temper which He knew and saw to exist within these men, who supposed their presence at His "reception" would be interpreted as a mark of honour and an act of condescension. He used a form of words which, had He not been that which He was and which He proved Himself to be, would have been unquestionably downright blasphemy. The Pharisees present, of course, could not enter into this. They heard the words of Jesus, and rightly interpreted them into a claim to forgive sins, which was the attribute of God alone. With their ideas, and in this frame of mind, they could form but one notion of the conduct of Jesus. "Who could forgive sins but God alone?" They did not (as will be

observed) express their ideas in words[9]. They were simply following out their own train of reasoning, when they were arrested by the solemn tones of Jesus—"Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'?" Turning then to the helpless cripple before Him, He called their attention to the man, and bade him at once take up the bed upon which he had been so long lying, and to carry it himself to his own house.

The man heard the words, and in full and perfect assurance that the power was thereby conferred upon him to obey them, arose immediately, took up his bed, and pushing his way through the throng, departed in unquestioning obedience, as he was bid.

It is not apparent upon the face of the narrative that the Pharisees were actuated by malicious feelings, when they internally attributed blasphemy to Jesus on hearing Him pronounce the forgiveness of sins. Apart from reasonable evidence of His authority, they would have been justified in their opinions; and, but from Jesus' own remark that those opinions were *evil*[1], it would have been perhaps unfair to fix a stigma upon them. Still, even the previous language of S. Luke implies that there had been manifestations of Divine power already on that very day, which left them without excuse; for, after stating that "there were Pharisees and Doctors of the Law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judæa, and Jerusalem[2]," he adds that "the power of the Lord was present to heal them[3]." The *healing* here alluded

[9] See Mark ii. 6—8.

[1] Matt. ix. 4.

[2] On the word κύριος, Winer observes that "in the Gospels it usually signifies God, the Old Test. Lord. In the Epistles, especially Paul's, after a Christian phraseology had been formed (it) means most frequently Christ the Lord.—It had already become almost a proper name."—Gram. of New Test., p. 136.

[3] Luke v. 17.

to is clearly not that of these incredulous men (of whom no mention is made that any were afflicted with illness), but that of the now usual crowd of sufferers who thronged His presence in belief of His power to save. The inference from the recorded miracle is that it was one which, from its peculiar nature and the utterly incurable nature of the malady, testified in the most striking and unimpeachable manner the real source of the power which He wielded.

The effect of the miracle, indeed, was apparently to silence the Pharisees entirely, while the multitude were filled with amazement; and, justly attributing the glory to God, remarked on their return home that they had indeed "seen strange things to-day[4]."

SHORE OF THE SEA OF TIBERIAS AGAIN. AFTERNOON OF THE SAME DAY.

A favourite resort with Jesus, when He desired to address the people of the neighbourhood, was the beach of the lake close to which Capernaum was situated. At the base of the hills which skirt the north-western shore there lies a broad strip of gently sloping ground reaching to the pebbly beach, which afforded ample space for the assembling of a large body of persons. It was a busy scene, full of life and activity—this strange piece of inland water. Fishermen and traders of various callings carrying on business with the population of the eastern shore, merchants, and all the motley throng that are to be found ever gathered by the water-side in the neighbourhood of a thriving maritime commercial town, presented the very field of labour in which His work could make itself felt. Here He would walk and watch the opportunities which day by day presented themselves; and either on the beach itself, or from the thwarts of Peter's fishing-vessel, He would

[4] Luke v. 26.

address the crowds that gathered at His Presence, or which followed His footsteps from the town.

How long it was after the events previously narrated, that the visit of Jesus to this busy scene which follows in the Evangelical history took place, cannot be ascertained with certainty, nor is it of much consequence to the general thread of events. From the language of S. Matthew it would almost seem that it was on the afternoon of the very same day. As He passed along the beach, followed by an eager throng[5] fresh from the scene of wonder and power, there sat by the waterside a man named Matthew Levi, a Publican, or collector of tolls and taxes, engaged in the exercise of his unpopular calling. His business there seems to have been that of collecting either tolls, or perhaps freight dues, from the traders who carried on their commerce between the two populations of the eastern and western shores. He had manifestly heard Jesus, perhaps oftentimes, as He taught the people in this neighbourhood, and was a firm believer in His doctrine and authority. Hitherto he had had no invitation to attach himself more definitely to the side of Jesus. Now, however, his faith was about to be put to the test. Jesus in the presence of all who followed, as He approached the table where Matthew sat, addressed to him the simple words "Follow Me." Without a word the busy Publican rose up in obedience to the command, quitted for ever the business of his past life, and devoted himself at once to the service of Him whom he now took for his Master.

Having thus resolved to give up wholly his former occupation, and to place himself unreservedly at the disposal of Jesus, Matthew proceeded to notify his determination in the most formal and public manner to his former friends and associates. He gave a large entertainment in honour of Jesus, during

[5] Mark ii. 13.

which he seems to have kept open house to all his late acquaintance, thus prominently asserting his own conviction, and in the most public manner paying the utmost respect and compliment to Jesus. The banquet was evidently upon a very large and liberal scale, and the company exceedingly numerous. Amongst them were seemingly many who had professed themselves disciples of Jesus, though probably not in the sense in which those especial few are to be considered whose names are already known in connexion with His teaching.

CAPERNAUM. HOUSE OF MATTHEW LEVI. EVENING OF THE SAME DAY.

Those of the Capernaites present who happened to belong to the sect of the Pharisees, or professed the exposition of the law, looked on with contempt and indignation, as they beheld this "Master of Israel" sitting at a banquet with a party of Publicans. The use these men made of the privilege thus freely accorded them was to find fault with the disciples for eating and drinking in company with Publicans and sinners. The object of the remark was very probably to raise up in their minds dissatisfaction with, or contempt for, their Master in so demeaning Himself below the standard of what ought to be expected of a person in His position and claiming His authority. But Jesus heard the insidious observation, and answered in His own name for His disciples, throwing around their weaker minds the shield of His guardian protection. He reminded these malicious objectors that they might as well complain of a *physician being found amongst the sick*, as object to His being present in a company of those whom they called sinners. He came to heal sickness both of soul and body, and to teach men to repent. It was therefore precisely amongst sinners who *felt* themselves to be such, and not

amongst those who believed themselves in perfect health, that His teaching and Presence might be looked for.

As there was no answer to His argument, the Pharisees at once shifted their ground; and, transferring their attack to Himself, demanded why the disciples of John the Baptist and of themselves practised constant fasts, and offered frequent prayers, while they who followed Him were to be found at festivals and banquets like the present.

Jesus replied in words which, while they contained the first foreshadowing of the issue between Himself and the opposition of the Pharisees, taught all who heard Him, by the medium of their own usages and proverbial expressions, the utter present incompatibility of such a course as they hinted at with the kind of life which His followers had to lead. He asked them whether it was reasonable to expect that the bridegroom's friend at a marriage-feast would fast in the presence of the bridegroom, when the house was given to festivity and happiness? The relations between Himself and His followers He showed were similar to this, and ought to be judged by a similar standard. But He conveyed, even so early as this, the prophecy of His own approaching end, when He said that the true time of fasting would be when the bridegroom should be taken away from his friends by violence, and it would follow naturally upon their bereavement. He showed the narrow-minded objectors the fallacy of their argument, by citing two well-known incongruities which proverbially resulted in injury or damage. Cloth fulled and cloth unfulled could not be sewn together without the new and raw cloth tearing away from the other, besides proving by its very appearance that it did not belong to it. In like manner if new wine be put into old skins, the process of fermentation causes the skins to burst, and the wine consequently to be lost. New wine should be put into new skins, and they help to preserve each other.

By these two illustrations Jesus warned the unbelieving Pharisees of the danger and futility of attempting to force practices and doctrines upon minds that were not prepared to receive them. There was a proper time and season for every thing. At present the disciples required to be encouraged and taught in the doctrines of the Gospel, as they were conformable to the nature of men. If the condition of the recipient is not favourable to new truths, it will be useless to try to force them upon his acceptance. A man accustomed to the softness of flavour in old wine will not be persuaded in a moment to admire the roughness and harshness of new wine. There would be quite enough of sorrow and real suffering to undergo ere long, without requiring the disciples to undergo at present mortifications which were not only uncalled for, and incompatible with the period of time, but apt to unfit them for, if not to set them wholly against, the kind of life they would by-and-by be called upon to lead.

No answer is recorded to these observations of the Lord; and with them the narrative of the entertainment in the house of Levi is brought to a close.

There is again a break in the thread of the Synoptical account. When next we hear of the movements of Jesus, He is found in Jerusalem, and the narrator of His actions is S. John.

CHAPTER II.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT SIX WEEKS FROM THE PASSOVER ON MARCH 29 IN THE YEAR A.D. 28, TO THE MIDDLE OF MAY IN THE SAME YEAR.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

SECT 1.—Transactions at the Second Passover.
SECT. 2.—The Deutero-prote Sabbath—Transactions in Galilee.
SECT. 3.—Ordination of the Twelve—From Capernaum Jesus goes to Nain.
SECT. 4.—Mission of John's disciples to Jesus—The first anointing of Jesus at Simon's house in Nain (Note on the Feast in S. John v. 1).

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. Matt.	S. Mark.	S. Luke.	S. John.
...	...	...	v. 1—47
xii. 1—8	ii. 23—28	vi. 1— 5	...
9—14	iii. 1— 6	6—11	...
15—21	7—12	...	...
x. 2— 4	13—19	12—49	...
viii. 5—13	...	vii. 1—10	..
...	...	11—16	...
xi. 2— 6	...	17—23	...
7—19	...	24—35	...
20—30	...	36—50	...

SECTION I.

THE narrative of Jesus' ministerial life is now brought down to the second Passover after His baptism, that is to the beginning

of April in the year of the common reckoning, A.D. 28 (A.U.C. 781), when Jesus had returned to Jerusalem for the purpose of attending the great festival, after having been absent from Judæa about three months.

The 14th of Nisan this year fell upon the 29th of March, so that, in order to be present according to custom four days before the commencement of the feast, Jesus must have quitted Capernaum somewhere about the 22nd of that month.

The narrative of S. John is here confined exclusively to one remarkable miracle; but his object appears to be not so much to relate the miracle itself, as to bring forward prominently the effect which it had upon the Jews.

POOL OF BETHESDA (BIRKET ISRAIL).

There was at this time in Jerusalem an artificial tank or pool[1] to which the name of Beth-Esda, or House of Grace, was given. Its site was close by the Sheep-gate, through which the sacrificial animals were driven, which itself (according to Nehemiah iii. 1, 3; xii. 39), was next to the Fish-gate, both being in the immediate neighbourhood of the Temple[2].

So far as can be judged from the cursory notice of this pool, it seems to have been set apart in great measure for the benefit of invalids. The waters must have partaken of the nature of all medicinal springs of an intermittent character such as are known to exist at Kissengen, Coriso, and other places. In all such there is, at certain times, varying according to the character of the spring, a sudden and gentle, or sometimes even a violent, ebullition of the water, owing to the escape of some subterranean or subaqueous gas. This ebullition causes a

[1] Stanley's "Sinai," &c., pp. 513, 514.

[2] The exact situation of Bethesda is probably now defined; and it is to be hoped that it will not be long before the labours of Capt. Wilson and Capt. Warren may be crowned with success in many other instances of the Palestine explorations.

general rising of the surface of the water which, after remaining stationary for a period at a certain height, gradually subsides again and regains its former level. As the curative or beneficial properties of the water depend mainly upon the gaseous impregnation, it follows that both the moment of ebullition, and the precise part of the pool where it takes place, are conjointly essential constituents of the healing action[3].

In the time of Jesus and His Apostles, this pool, which must therefore have been of some considerable extent, was surrounded by five cloisters, or colonnades, covered in for defence against the heavy autumnal rains[4]. There were at this particular time a very large number of invalids disposed about the colonnades, and waiting until the ebullition of the gas should take place. It is not known how frequently the phenomenon occurred. In different springs it varies from hours to days. But that it must have happened at short intervals is evident from the great multitude of sick persons that lay or stood around the brink of the pool in expectation of the moving of the water.

THE SABBATH DAY.

Among the patients thus congregated was a man who had been suffering from an infirmity for thirty-eight years of his

[3] Ritter v. 454, 455, speaks of the fountain of the Virgin, which is "sometimes quite dry, and then suddenly gushes up again between the stones.—On the 21st Jan. he (T. Tobler) remarked what he had not seen before, a considerable gushing up of the water, which rose four inches and a half and was connected with a gentle billowy motion. On the 14th of March this bubbling up continued more than twenty minutes, till it attained its greatest height, when it gradually, in two hours' time, resumed its original elevation. It rose at this time as much as six inches and a half, and on sinking back presented a surface of mirror-like smoothness. The greatest altitude was remarked about three o'clock in the afternoon."—Hengstenberg, i. 257, 258.

[4] There are many instances of this kind of enclosed pool in India. One of the finest specimens is that of the Taj Bowree at Beejapoor. The pool itself is 223 feet square and 52 feet deep. The central archway is of 35 feet span and the frontage 490 feet in length. There are numerous colonnades or recessed arches in the surrounding wall.

life. This infirmity seems to have been a weakness of one or both legs, arising probably out of a scrofulous affection, and causing a wasting of the muscles which greatly impeded his movements. He had been there some little time apparently, and had made several attempts to get near the sanitary point of the pool, but had been always anticipated by some fellow-sufferer whose illness did not equally interfere with his powers of movement. It was the Sabbath Day; and in the intervals of the Temple services Jesus walked with His disciples to this pool for the purpose, as may be inferred, of finding suitable objects for the exercise of His mercy. His eye lit upon this one sufferer among others. Jesus asked the invalid if he were anxious to be restored to health. The man, not as yet comprehending the nature or purpose of the question, any more than the character of the person who asked it, replied humbly, explaining the reason of his apparent indolence, that he had no one to help him into the pool, that his own movements were necessarily very slow and feeble, and that consequently while he was endeavouring to get down, some other person whose malady did not affect his powers of motion always got before him. He had thus vainly waited hitherto for his chance. Jesus made no reply to the plain and pathetically simple statement of the invalid, but simply bade him "*Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.*"

As He spoke, the feeble knees received strength, the wasted muscles recovered their fibrous power, the shattered nerves were restored to their wonted energy, and without a word the man obeyed the voice of the Master, lifted the bed which so lately had supported his shattered frame, and, returning to deposit his burden in his home, at once sought the court of the Temple, there to pour out his soul in thanks to God for the great and wondrous mercy he had experienced.

On his way to his own house the man was met by several

of the Jews (i. e. according to the usual phraseology of S. John, *Pharisees of Jerusalem*), who, in surprise and indignation at the profanation of the Sabbath Day, reminded him what day it was, and that it was not lawful for him to *carry* his bed.

The man replied that *He that had made him whole* had given him the command to take up his bed, and carry it away. The Jews therefore questioned him as to who it was who could have given him command to break the Sabbath. The man, however, was unable to point Him out; for as there were a very large concourse of persons in the neighbourhood of the bath, it being evidently a place of public resort and promenade, He did not choose to expose Himself to the curiosity, and perhaps the dangerous intrusion, of the people.

Some little time afterwards, while the man was, perhaps, offering his thanks to God in the Temple, Jesus came to where he was, and addressing him bade him bear in mind that he had now been mercifully relieved of a terrible calamity, and warned him to sin no more, lest a worse thing should befall him than that which He had just removed.

When left to himself, the man departed and informed the Jews who had previously questioned him, that it was Jesus who had *made him whole.* He considered that the miracle which had cured himself was sufficient evidence of the right of Jesus to issue the command regarding his carrying his bed; and he no doubt thought that it would be sufficient for them as well as for himself. The result, however, was simply to exasperate the Jews against Jesus. They commenced a series of persecutions against Him, and finally came to the resolution of putting Him to death, if only a plausible ground of accusation could be discovered against Him.

The record of S. John ceases with his account of this transaction and the conversation which accompanied and followed

it. The thread of the narrative is again resumed by the Synoptists with the return of Jesus into what they regard as the chief area of His labours, the cities and villages of populous Galilee.

SECTION II.

IT could have been but a very short time after the miracle recorded in the last section, which left Jesus at some time during the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem, when He is again found with His disciples in the neighbourhood of what was now His own home in Capernaum.

CAPERNAUM. THE DEUTERO-PROTE SABBATH. FIRST WEEK IN JUNE.

It is not possible to define with exactness the precise day on which the circumstance took place which is now presented to our notice, although S. Luke, with his customary precision, affixes to the day the special name by which it was marked in the Jewish calendar. It was, according to his statement, a "second-first Sabbath," a term which, occurring nowhere else in the Gospels, or in any other Jewish writings, has given rise naturally to many very various conjectures as to its meaning. Still, though we may be unable to identify the day itself, there can be no doubt as to the period of the year to which it belonged. It was at some short distance of time *after* the Passover, and before the harvest itself had been all gathered in. The barley harvest preceded that of wheat by a short time; and the first fruits, or wave-sheaf, were offered on the 16th day of Nisan, from which fifty days were calculated to the sixth of Sivan, during which time the whole harvest was gathered, the Feast of Pentecost (or of the fiftieth day), being the festival of rejoicing

and thanksgiving for the in-gathering of the fruits of the earth. The *second first Sabbath* therefore must have fallen at some time between these two periods, or rather on some day after the 25th of Nisan, supposing Jesus to have returned to Galilee immediately after the close of the Paschal week. And this He would probably do from motives of precaution, seeing that the party of the Sanhedrim were already determined if possible to compass His death.

Opinions as to the meaning of S. Luke's expression will necessarily vary according as the feast in S. John v. 1, is understood to be the feast of the Passover, or some other perhaps earlier festival, such as that of Purim, which is the view adopted by Wieseler. But this view is altogether incompatible with a correct chronology. For the year in which the event described took place was not the *second*[5], but the *first*, after the great Sabbatical year. All suppositions therefore based upon that erroneous assumption must be rejected. Moreover, it is an additional argument that the date must be assigned to a period after the Passover, that Levit. xxiii. 14 expressly forbids the eating of the ears of corn before the 16th of Nisan[6].

Neither could it have been the Sabbath *after* the feast of Pentecost, because then there would have been no standing crops in the fields, for the one festal day of Pentecost on which the two loaves made of the new flour of the year's harvest were offered, was the festival of the harvest, after all had been reaped. We are thus constrained of necessity to place the date of the second-first or deutero-prote Sabbath somewhere between the 16th of Nisan and the 6th of Sivan (the month next but one following); in other words, we are limited to a period of six weeks, in which there must have been six or per-

[5] See Chron. Notes, Table 3. [6] See Wieseler himself, p. 204.

haps seven weekly Sabbaths, irrespective of the Paschal Octave, to choose from.

There is, however, a yet further limitation of time to be considered, if the feast of John v. 1 be really (as indeed there can be now no question) the Passover; for in that case Jesus would not have reached Galilee, where the occurrence manifestly took place, until ten days after the 16th of Nisan. There is therefore a period of only about thirty-eight or forty days, from the one feast to the other within which the search for this Sabbath is necessarily confined. It would help us in the determination of the date, could we be certain whether the grain which the Apostles gathered was that of barley or of wheat, for the wheat harvest succeeded that of barley, as we know. It would perhaps be more natural to suppose they were the latter, as being the more satisfying; but on this point we cannot arrive at any certainty. If, however, it was wheat which they plucked, we gain still a period later than the Paschal season.

Turning now to the word itself, *δευτερόπρωτον*, there can be but little question that the etymology suggests (1) that it was a peculiar or a great Sabbath; (2) that there were other Sabbaths of a similar nature, amongst which this particular one held the second place, in point of either order or rank, or perhaps both. Scaliger's generally received explanation seems certainly incompatible with the principles of etymology, as well as irreconcilable with the period of time apparently required by the chronological arrangement of events. The same objection applies to the conjectures of Chrysostom, Epiphanius, and Isidore Pelusiota, as well as of Vasquez. The view advanced by Wieseler is one which upon *etymological* grounds has far more to recommend it; but the objections which seem fatal to it are, as has been already hinted, that according to the chronological arrangement this would have been the

πρωτό-πρωτον, or simply the πρῶτον σάββατον, as occurring in the first year after the Sabbatical year, as well as that it places the date too early. He supposes that the first Sabbath in each year of the Sabbatical cycle (i. e. the first Sabbath Nisan in each of the seven years) was (according to the position of the year in the cycle) a first, a second-first, and so down to the seventh-first, when the cycle commenced anew. The conjecture is highly ingenious; but apart from other considerations, it seems strange that, if not in the brief Gospel narrations, at all events in Josephus, there should be no incidental allusion to such a nomenclature. For although a similar objection applies in some measure to all attempts at defining the day, it lies with the greatest force against so prominent a date as that of the very first Sabbath in the whole year, which as a civil as well as an ecclesiastical epoch[7], we should expect to meet with in the post-captivity times.

If, then, this particular day was a first or great Sabbath, and if the word implies that there had been one such Sabbath before it, to which it bore the relation of second to first (it is immaterial whether in order or rank or both), there can be no other idea arising out of a consideration of the Jewish calendar, than that these Sabbaths are styled in connexion with the great feasts with which they are respectively associated.

If these be so, then there can be no difficulty in assenting to that general view which regards the first great month of Nisan as in great measure linked with this question. For the FIRST Sabbath may be readily conceded to be the first Sabbath in the month of Nisan, immediately preceding in *most* years the Paschal Feast commencing on the fourteenth of the month; and the Second-First would become the First Sabbath in Sivan immediately preceding in *some* years the feast of Pentecost.

[7] See the articles on "Month" and "Year" in Smith's Dict. of the Bible.

For there were three great festivals, those of the Passover, the Pentecostal Day, and the Tabernacles. Of these the first was ecclesiastically the greatest, and the Sabbath belonging to or immediately preceding it would be justly termed (*par excellence*, κατ' ἐξοχήν) THE FIRST; while the other two would become respectively the Second-First and the Third-First. It would only be necessary in the present case to assume that in this particular year the Sabbath *did* fall *before* the feast of Pentecost, a matter which can be neither proved nor disproved absolutely.

This supposition, which was started by the learned Jesuit Maldonatus, has the sanction of Cornelius à Lapide[8], who has brought together all the opinions existing in his time upon the subject. And certainly in respect of etymology, of intrinsic plausibility, and of adaptation to the apparent *time and season of the year*, it seems to carry with it the greatest amount of probability.

It would appear, in the absence of proof to the contrary, that a succession of such principal days has reference rather to a "cursus" in an individual year than to a cycle of several and independent years. It is more consonant with general habits of reckoning to believe that the succession was contiguous, rather than so widely separated, while for all the purposes of civil as well as religious calculation the Neomenia itself was ample.

In noticing the ingenuity of the calculation proposed by Wieseler, it is to be observed that the *principle of explanation of the name* is the same, whichever be the true assignment of the date.

CORNFIELDS IN GALILEE. A SABBATH DAY.

It was on this day, then, that Jesus, with His disciples, was walking through the standing fields of corn, on His way either

[8] Comm. in iv. Evang., pp. 97—99.

to or from the Synagogue of Capernaum. He Himself walked down the beaten path which led as usual through the middle of the field; but the disciples, less able to endure hunger than Himself, diverged from the track into the standing crop, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and rub them in their hands to free them from their husks, and so appease their appetites[9]. Some Pharisees who had accompanied Jesus called His attention to this Act of His followers, as a thing unlawful to be done on the Sabbath Day. It does not appear quite clearly what was the precise point of the objection. To pluck the ears of corn to appease hunger was *expressly permitted* by the Law of Moses. "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand[10]." It could have hardly been the rubbing them in their hands which the Pharisees construed into manual labour, and as such an infringement of the law, for SS. Matthew and Mark take no notice of this fact. The ears of grain would, of course, have been useless without this operation. It seems more probable that the Pharisees who were accustomed, contrary to the original spirit of the Sabbath, to observe a fast until noon, complained that the disciples should persist in violating this tradition of the elders.

Jesus at once defended His disciples, first by the example of David, who in "the days of Abiathar the High Priest[1], took

[9] The following passage is interesting, as showing the permanence of Eastern habits:—

"The wheat was now ripening; and we had here a beautiful illustration of Scripture. Our Arabs 'were an hungered,' and going into the fields they 'plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.' On being questioned, they said this was an old custom, and no one would speak against it; they were supposed to be hungry, and it was allowed as a charity. We saw this afterwards in repeated instances."—Robinson's Bibl. Res., i. 493.

[10] Deut. xxiii. 25. See also Lange on S. Matt., i. p. 432.

[1] "Rather in the days of Chief Priest Abiathar." See S. Luke iii. 2;

the showbread out of the tabernacle to appease the hunger of himself and his half-famished followers. The account of this transaction is given in 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6. The bread which David asked for, and which he received at the hands of the priest, was that which had been removed from the table in the tabernacle in order to make room for the fresh loaves which were to take their place, according to the injunction in Lev. xxiv. 5—9. It was, therefore, no longer strictly ἄρτος τῆς προθέσεως, i. e. "bread of the Presentation," for it had been superseded by other newer bread; still it was not lawful (as having been once the "bread of the Presence of God") for any but the priests to eat it. The justification was the urgency of the case and the importance of David's life as the *chosen of God*. Jesus therefore pointed out to the Pharisees that, as the greater covers the less, so the precedent of David might surely exculpate so very venial a transaction as the present.

Again, He asked them whether they had not read in their own law that the priests in the temple every Sabbath Day of necessity break the commandment, in order to perform the necessary duties of the temple worship; and yet they are justly free from blame[2]. It could not be, therefore, that there was such an inherent sanctity in the Day itself but that it might be profaned upon occasion and for necessary purposes, if even

iv. 27; Acts xi. 28. "S. Mark has been charged with an anachronism because this event took place in the high priesthood of Ahimelech, the father of Abiathar (1 Sam. xxi. 1). But the Evangelist does not say that it occurred ἐπὶ Ἀρχιέρεως Ἀβιάθαρ; i. e. in the high priesthood of Abiathar, as he would have written, if he had thought that Abiathar was high priest at the time. But he says that it happened ἐπὶ Ἀβιάθαρ Ἀρχιέρεως, which indeed intimates that it was in the days of Abiathar; but it rather suggests that he was *not* the high priest then, and that the reference is made to him as a celebrated high priest. Indeed, he is mentioned in the next chapter of the history as the high priest who followed David with the Urim and Thummim, when he was persecuted by Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 20; xxx. 7)."—Words. Gk. Test., p. 97. See also Lange on S. Mark, iii. 209.

[2] See Num. xxviii. 9, 10.

priests could do so without committing sin. Jesus, however, intimates that possibly they might urge that, being done in and for the temple service, the temple and its requirements covered the breach of the commandment (in fact it was a maxim of the Jews that "*in templo non est Sabbatum*"). He therefore declares that there stood before them One who was greater than the temple itself, and whose dispensation, therefore, was quite sufficient to absolve His followers from sin. He tells them that, had they known the meaning of their own Scripture —"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice[3]"—they would not have condemned those who were innocent of any crime in that for which they censured them. For "the Son of Man," He who being God was now manifested in the form of men and born of human nature, was Lord of the Sabbath itself[4].

A week again passes, and Jesus is found on His way apparently to the same synagogue upon the following Sabbath Day. There were, no doubt, present the same, or some of the same, persons with whom He had held the discussion regarding the Sabbath Day on the previous occasion. He had then disproved their calumnious charges and insinuations by Scripture and by reason. He now proceeds by a miracle to prove His title to be considered Lord of the Sabbath Day.

There was a man amongst the assembled body of worshippers who had a withered hand. From a comparison of the several synoptical accounts it would appear that the Pharisees, who were as usual in attendance to watch the acts of Jesus, observed this person on his way into the synagogue, if they had not actually contrived his presence there. Judging rightly

[3] See Hosea vi. 6.

[4] The expression does not read as strongly in the A. V. as it does in the original. The κύριος stands there *first*. It is quite clear also that the words of Jesus were intended to be, and probably were, understood as an asser- [c] His Messiahship.

that there was an opportunity of shortly testing the conduct of Jesus, they inquired of Him whether it was in His opinion lawful to heal on the Sabbath Days. Without at the moment directly answering the question He asked them, in turn, whether there was any one among them who might have a solitary sheep belonging to him, who, if that sheep should happen on some Sabbath Day to fall into one of the open disused wells in the open country, would not without hesitation lay hold of it and drag it out, despite of the sanctity of the day. And as an act of mercy it would not be reprehensible. Inasmuch, then, as the life of a man is more valuable than that of a sheep, it would be the holier act to render kindness to a man. "Wherefore it is lawful," said Jesus, "*to do well*" (not merely to *heal*, but to render any act of kindness, mercy, and goodness) "on the Sabbath Days[5]."

On entering the synagogue, the Scribes and Pharisees, who had sullenly held their peace having nothing to reply to the direct assertion of Jesus, watched Him whether He would put His acknowledged principles into practice by healing the man who had the withered hand. Their object was, of course, to lay an accusation against Him which might at least be taken notice of in the local synagogual council by excommunicating Him, or might possibly even form the grounds of a representation to the supreme court of the Sanhedrim. Reading their thoughts, Jesus at once brought the matter to an issue between them in the face of the whole assembled congregation. Addressing the man, He said in the tone of authority, "Rise up, and stand forth in the midst[6]." The man had faith enough to believe that Jesus had the power to heal him, as well as courage enough to bear the enmity of the Pharisees at His bidding; and the instant Jesus spoke he obeyed and left his place, and walked forward into the open space in the midst of

[5] Matt. xii. 12. [6] Luke vi. 8.

the congregation. The attention of all present, therefore, was thus concentrated upon that which was about to follow. Jesus now turned to the Pharisees, and virtually put them upon their trial before the assembled people. "I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the Sabbath Days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it[7]?"

It was impossible to answer the question. The people were plainly on the side of Jesus; and common usage, as well as common sense, would have sanctioned His healing of the man, which was the point upon which they hoped to found an accusation against Him. But there was more than this: they felt that Jesus had read their very thoughts, and was aware that the object with which they were even at the moment engrossed was the mode by which they might best and soonest compass His death. They could not, and they dared not, speak. "They held their peace." Looking round then upon them, amid the anxious silence of all the spectators, with a countenance expressive of indignation at their hardened obstinacy and malice, and of grief for the judgment they were accumulating against themselves, He said simply to the man who stood there alone in the midst, "Stretch forth thine hand." The man did so; and before the eyes of all, the wasted withered flesh acquired upon the instant the sound and healthy character of the other hand.

What the effect of the miracle was upon the people in general is to be gathered from the statements of the multitude following Him as He quitted the synagogue, and the applications made by sufferers afflicted with all kinds of maladies for the healing which He never refused to the prayer of faith. The effect upon the Pharisees was to exasperate them well-nigh to madness at the humiliation to which they had been exposed by their utter defeat in the presence of the illiterate multitude, and by the now certain conviction that Jesus had

[7] Luke vi. 9.

fully penetrated their evil designs upon His life. In the extremity of their rage and shame they applied to the Herodians (with whom they had a continual feud) sinking their lesser antipathies in the common hatred which they entertained against Jesus. A conference was shortly after held between these two parties for the purpose of devising a plan for procuring the death of Jesus; and there can be little doubt that, if grounds for legal condemnation should be found wanting, they were quite prepared to plan His assassination.

The head-quarters of this party (which was a purely political one) was in this neighbourhood at Tiberias, an opulent and handsome city which was at this time the capital of Galilee. It had been built by Herod Antipas, who had a palace of his own there, and was named in honour of his patron and suzerain, the Emperor Tiberius. The Herodian party, though not large, was formed out of those Jews who, in their hatred of the foreign yoke of Rome, and yet with the degenerate fondness for the fashions and amusements of the heathen, looked to the Herodian Dynasty as interposing something like a barrier between themselves and the actual foreign conqueror. A purely secular and political party, therefore, such as were those who in the Gospels are styled Herodians, would naturally view with dislike and even hatred such a spiritual system as Jesus was now rapidly introducing, under which, should it prevail ultimately over the minds of the people, their own influence, the pleasures and occupations of their lives, would be lost, or destroyed. Incongruous, therefore, as were the elements of union, they coalesced under the pressure of a common bond stronger even than the antipathies which had hitherto kept them asunder.

SHORE OF THE SEA OF TIBERIAS. THE FOLLOWING DAY.

On learning the fact of this coalition between His enemies,

and the result of their consultation, Jesus withdrew Himself from the neighbourhood; and, attended by His disciples, went down to the seaside. His object was, as appears from the subsequent narrative, partly to avoid the inconvenient pressure of the crowd, and partly to have the means of ready transit to the opposite shore, should circumstances render a further retreat advisable.

SECTION III.

HILL COUNTRY ROUND CAPERNAUM. JUNE. A.D. 28.

THE time had now arrived when it became necessary to make further arrangements for the spread of the Gospel amongst the people. The disciples could not all leave their homes for any very lengthened time without injury to their worldly callings, which it was not the will of Jesus to permit. He now, therefore, proceeded to choose out of the great body of His disciples, (that is of those who most generally and regularly followed His movements) a certain number who should be solemnly set apart to assist Him in the great work of the ministry.

Previously to making this selection, as upon a former solemn occasion when He was about to make His first missionary experiment alone upon the faith of His countrymen, He retired, apart from all His followers and friends, into the hilly district in the neighbourhood of the Sea of Tiberias, where, under the soft sky of the early summer, He passed the night in secret commune with the Father.

When it was day, He summoned to His presence the whole body of His disciples. To how many they now amounted we do not know, but there must have been a very considerable number

gradually gathered together out of the multitudes of those who had been spectators and recipients of His wonderful and beneficent powers. When they were all assembled together before Him, Jesus proceeded to make a selection of a certain number who should thenceforth become His delegates in the great Ministerial work of the Messiahship. The number which He chose was *Twelve;* a number which it is impossible to help connecting with the number of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, and of the Princes or heads of each tribe [8]. In fact the language of Jesus Himself points to this ground of selection, where He promises that in the παλιγγενεσία, they "shall sit upon Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel [9]."

To the Twelve Disciples whom Jesus with great solemnity, after His night of watching and of prayer, selected to carry out the future work of Evangelization, He gave now for the first time the name of Apostles, or *The Sent.* The word, indeed, indicates of itself somewhat of the nature of their office; but it will be better understood by recourse to the original application of it which seems to have been made amongst the Jews, as the designation of "One who carried about encyclical letters from their rulers [1]." So Œcumenius explains the name as current in his own time (tenth century); and such seems to be the use of the term by S. Paul in Gal. i. 1, "when he asserts that he was 'an apostle *not of men, neither by man* [2],'" i. e. not like those who were known among his countrymen by that title.

The intention of this selection was, in the words of S. Mark [3], "that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils."

[8] Num. i. 5.
[9] Matt. xix. 28. See also below, *in loco.*
[1] See Kitto's Cyclop. (Art. Apostles), p. 179.
[2] See ibid.; also John xiii. 6.
[3] Mark iii. 14, 15.

There are no less than four different lists given by the Evangelists of these Twelve Apostles; and as there are some varieties in both the order and the names, it will be well to place them side by side, in order to present the variations clearly. The first list is that given by S. Matthew (ch. x. 2—4), after he has described (not their ordination, but) their subsequent mission upon the work of preaching and healing in the villages and towns of Israel. The second and the third are given respectively by S. Mark, and S. Luke, immediately after the recital of their ordination. S. John does not mention them specifically at all. The fourth list is supplied from the book of the Acts, and is, therefore, also from the pen of S. Luke, where he enumerates the names of the Eleven Apostles met together in the upper room in Jerusalem for the purpose of co-opting one into their body to fill the place of Judas Iscariot[4].

The lists are as follow:—

Matthew x. 2—4.	Mark iii. 16—19.	Luke vi. 14—16.	Luke, Acts i. 13.
1. Simon.	Simon.	Simon.	Peter.
2. Andrew.	James.	Andrew.	James.
3. James.	John.	James.	John.
4. John.	Andrew.	John.	Andrew.
5. Philip.	Philip.	Philip.	Philip.
6. Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Thomas.
7. Thomas.	Matthew.	Matthew.	Bartholomew.
8. Matthew.	Thomas.	Thomas.	Matthew.
9. James (son of Alphæus).	James.	James.	James.
10. Lebbæus (surnamed Thaddæus).	Thaddæus.	Simon Zelotes.	Simon Zelotes.
11. Simon the Kananite.	Simon the Kananite.	Judas (b. of James).	Judas (b. of James).
12. Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	

As regards the variations in the order in which these names occur, "if the lists be severally divided into three parts, each

[4] Acts i. 13.

part containing four names, the same Apostles are found in each division. The first division consists of Peter, Andrew, James, and John. Here we remark that Peter is always first; and that James always, in the received text, precedes John; but it is doubtful whether he should in the Acts. The second division consists of Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew. Philip is always first in this division. The remaining division has always James the son of Alphæus at the head, and the traitor is always last[5]."

It does not appear upon what principle the variations in the order of the others is made; but it is possible, as the same writer thinks, that S. Matthew has placed the names of the Twelve in the order of their *calling;* S. Mark, in that of their *Ordination;* S. Luke, in that of their subsequent *Mission;* while in the Acts they may be arranged in the order of their association after the resurrection of Jesus.

So far as the Gospels inform us, there were four fishermen and one publican among the Twelve Apostles who were to commence, under their Divine Master, the regeneration of the world. Of the occupations of the remainder we know nothing with certainty.

As to the order in which they followed their Master in His travels, for the disciples always walked *behind* the teacher amongst the Jews, it is not unlikely that they formed in fours. The first row or rank would consist, in the order of precedence, of—

1. Simon Peter, James, John, Andrew.
2. Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas.
3. James (the Less), Judas (b. of James the Less), Simon (Zelotes), Judas Iscariot.)

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[5] Forshall, First 12 cc. of S. Matt. pp. 90, 91. "The first eight disciples are arranged with evident reference to the order in which they were called; of the calling of Thomas, and the last four, we have no specific account."—Webster and Wilk.'s Gk. Test., vol. i. p. 45.

And this, it will be seen, is the order in which the accurate S. Mark arranges the names in his list.

In the mission of the Twelve, it is very possible that the six pairs would be otherwise arranged, according to the compatibility of tempers, or greater personal intimacy, or from other causes of such-like character.

This little body of men, now associated together finally for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, had of course some internal organization and distribution of offices amongst themselves for the common good. And it was owing to this fact, no doubt, that disputes arose amongst them in after days as to the posts which they should fill in the kingdom which they still to the last expected that, in some way, their Lord would visibly establish upon the earth.

So far as Scripture is our guide, it appears that Peter was the general spokesman of the party in communication with Jesus (though none ventured, as a rule, to originate the conversation[6]); that Judas was the treasurer of the common fund; and that Philip was caterer or purveyor of the daily food for all the company.

On the conclusion of His solemn charge Jesus descended from the platform on the hill, where He had publicly conferred the Divine commission upon the Twelve, and was returning to His home in Capernaum. As He was entering the city, He was met by a party of Jewish elders, presbyters of one of the synagogues of the place, with an urgent entreaty that He would come and exercise His marvellous powers in favour of a heathen person, a centurion of the Roman army, who had apparently been quartered among them for some time and had succeeded in gaining in a very unusual degree the respect and affection of

[6] See S. Matt. xiii. 10, where it is said that the disciples *came* to Jesus to ask Him a question. They had been sitting, as usual, respectfully apart.

His Jewish neighbours. This officer had become a convert to the Jewish religion, and been admitted to the privileges of a proselyte. In acknowledgment of the benefits which he had derived from the knowledge of the true God, he had, at his own expense, erected the synagogue of which their deputation were presbyters or elders[7].

It was not the custom of Jesus ever to refuse the request of persons who asked His aid in reliance upon His power to effect the accomplishment of their prayers. The officer, however, be it observed, was a heathen; and to such He had expressly declared that He was *not sent*. The fact of the man being a proselyte, however, coupled with the personal request of the Jews themselves, is sufficient to explain an apparent deviation from His general rule. He therefore intimated at once His readiness to accede to their request, and accepted their escort and guidance to the house where the centurion dwelt. As He was nearing the house, the centurion, whose instruction had been to his friends simply to implore the healing of his servant by the *word* of Jesus, perceived the approach of the Great Physician and His escort. He was grieved, and in His humility *ashamed* that Jesus should have been troubled, by excess of zeal and deficiency of faith on the part of his friends, to take an unnecessary journey to his dwelling. He therefore sent others of his acquaintances who were probably, after Jewish custom, come to console him in his grief, imploring Jesus not to trouble Himself to come all the way in person, for he was not worthy of so distinguished an honour as that He should personally come under his roof.

The fervour and simplicity of this devout Gentile were not lost upon the great Master of Israel. Turning to His followers, Jesus observed that He had never yet met with so great an in-

[7] Jahn, Bibl. Ant., p. 470.

stance of faith in that favoured nation which claimed to be the Israel of God. And He added that "many should come from the East and West, and should sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the *children of the kingdom* should be cast into outer darkness: there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth[8]."

Addressing Himself then to those who had just brought the message of the centurion, Jesus desired them to return home at once, adding that the result of the soldier's petition would correspond exactly to the measure of his faith.

When the friends who had brought the message reached again the centurion's house, the young man was found to be perfectly well. Present in power, though absent in body, Jesus had bidden the sickness depart; and no trace of illness was left upon the countenance or frame of the lately dying man.

NAIN. THE FOLLOWING DAY.

The following day Jesus left Capernaum, and walked, attended by a large body of His now regular disciples, and a great many of the inhabitants of the town, to a neighbouring village called Nain. It was, perhaps, not without deliberate intention that He suffered or desired the presence of a large number of witnesses of His intended action. The village was about twenty miles distant from Capernaum, and situated somewhat to the southwards of Mount Tabor. Its position is nearly upon the summit of a hill, towards which a long and open road leads in a winding course. As Jesus and His escort approached the outskirts of the town, a melancholy procession met them. A young man had recently died there, who appears to have been the main if not the only support of an aged and widowed mother. She seems to have been much respected in the village,

[8] S. Matt. viii. 11, 12.

and the numerous escort were paying this their last tribute of respect to the bereaved parent.

Jesus, who walked as usual at the head of His followers, was touched by the sight of the sorrowing procession. Advancing before His escort, who waited in silent and anxious expectation, ignorant as yet of the last mighty development of power which He designed to put forth, He came and laid His hand upon the bier. Something in the gesture, and the look with which it was accompanied, went straight to the minds of the bearers; and, at the touch of Jesus' hand they at once stood still, in obedience to a command which, if not expressed, was yet felt and understood.

But in the still and dread suspense of all—for there was something in the tone of voice that bade the poor widow "*weep not*"—that Voice was heard speaking to the dead, as though its tones were heard in the invisible abode of the departed, "Young man, I SAY unto thee, Arise." And, at the moment, he that was dead, aroused from the sleep in which he had been so lately wrapped, obeyed the summons of his Lord, and rising up in the bier whereon he had lain began at once to speak, as though in wonderment at the scene in which he found himself so strangely placed. Amid the silent awe of all who witnessed the mighty deed, Jesus delivered the son into the care of the mother, who had scarce yet ceased from mourning for the dead!

SECTION IV.

NAIN. JUNE.

THIS great miracle at Nain marks a distinct epoch in the ministerial work of Jesus. The tidings, as a matter of course,

spread far and wide, that a dead man had been raised again to life by the mere word of the Prophet of Nazareth.

The effect upon the minds of the Pharisaic party was seriously to derange all their plans for His destruction, which had already been greatly marred by His retirement to Galilee. For there, far removed from the centre of the theocratic power, the influence of the priestly party was greatly diminished; and even the Pharisees of the north shared, to some extent, the greater liberality of the commercial district, and were less seriously disturbed by the new and silent revolution that was making rapid head around them. Upon the whole, therefore, it had been judged expedient to endeavour to weaken the hold which Jesus had manifestly acquired over the hearts and feelings of the people by continued devices and plots calculated to exhibit Him in the light of an habitual breaker of the Law of Moses, and so to raise up the spirit of religious opposition which would most surely tend to His downfall.

It was in this spirit and with this object that the Sanhedrim despatched emissaries so early as the spring of A.D. 28, in order to watch every word and act of Jesus, for the purpose of misrepresentation. His wondrous power, and the Divine knowledge, however, enabled Him to frustrate the devilish plans of these men, by proving incontestably (1) the difference between the letter and the spirit of a formular religion like that of Moses, and (2) the authority which He possessed, and of which He had given (and was continually giving) incontestable proofs, of setting aside mere forms, *as such*, where the requisitions of mercy were concerned.

The main difficulty, of course, with which these men had to deal was the healing of diseases (especially of that which has always been incurable by human means, namely leprosy) and the casting out of demons. Various explanations were naturally resorted to of these different phenomena, the two chief, and

indeed the only, alternatives, as an escape from the admission of Divine power, being the supposition either of clever imposture, or of an unholy compact with some chief of the unclean tribe of spirits. With regard to the former, it does not appear that any attempt was ever made to explain away the *cures*. They were simply passed over as probably mere instances of clever diagnosis, or of the power of a stronger over a weaker imagination. As to the latter, all misrepresentation was rendered ineffectual by the simple argument *ad hominem* that, as the power of exorcism did by admission reside to some extent with the Jews themselves, there could be no excuse for their charging Him with an unholy power, which they would certainly have repudiated for their own practice.

It was in the midst of this state of feeling on the part of the Pharisees, and when He had now been for fifteen months preaching in their synagogues, confuting all His adversaries, and healing all manner of diseases, that the visit to Nain took place, and a sudden crisis in the Evangelical history is brought about by the raising of the dead man, the son of the widow of that little village.

For the general body of the Jewish nation, it was difficult to reconcile the language and actions of Jesus with the popular preconceptions. As yet He had shown no indications of the assumption of a sovereign character, or of that of a popular leader of revolutionary feeling; and it was, therefore, with mingled sensations of curiosity and perplexity that they watched the daily life of Jesus for some intimation of His final intentions. The miracle at Nain did but increase the wonder of these men, at the same time that it introduced a perfectly new element into their speculations which they felt themselves unequal to cope with. They consequently, in their extreme amazement and mental confusion, returned to their own master John, to whom they appear to have been allowed occasional access,

partly to report the wondrous circumstance for his information, partly to obtain, if possible, some assistance to their own minds.

It appears from the tenour of S. Luke's narrative that Jesus was still at the little village of Nain, when two of John's disciples, who had been to the fortress of Machærus with the tidings of the mighty miracle, returned, by his orders, to Jesus with the question, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" At the time of their arrival Jesus was surrounded by numbers of persons who had come to implore His assistance. Many of these He cured of infirmities and plagues; many evil spirits He cast out; and many that were blind received their sight from the same merciful hand. On the conclusion of His labours, probably when even was come, Jesus gave the envoys of John the answer to bear back to their master. He bade them go, and report the evidence of their own eyes and ears, the things which they had seen and heard, "how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." Then, with a significance which was designed to set the mind of John at rest, He added "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me[9]."

On the departure of the two disciples, Jesus addressed Himself to the multitude regarding John. The answer which He had returned to the Baptist partook somewhat of the nature of a gentle reproof for seeming impatience, or failing faith. The words of Jesus to the people now are evidently calculated to confirm, and even exalt, the opinion which the multitude had always entertained regarding the character and mission of John. He reminded them of the time when they had flocked in crowds to the wilderness to hear him preach, to submit to Baptism at his hands, and to listen to his testimony regarding

[9] Luke vii. 22, 23.

both his own office and the character of the coming Messiah. They did not go, He told them, to see a reed shaken with the wind. The rustling sedges of the Jordan were no emblems of a character so fixed and resolute as that of the now imprisoned John. He was no waverer nor doubter, though his message might seem to imply impatience or petulance. Neither did they expect to find in the rugged preacher of the wilderness the softness or effeminacy of one who wore soft clothing and gorgeous apparel, such as becomes only those who enjoy the delicate living of royal palaces. John was made of sterner spirit, and to his strong and faithful mind He had addressed the message He had sent. Was it, however, He asked, a Prophet whom they expected to see, when they went to the wilderness to look for John? "Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a Prophet. This is he," said Jesus, "of whom it is written, 'Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee[1].'" That John was a Prophet was what they all acknowledged; but Jesus points to that far higher character which belonged to him, as the connecting link between the Prophets of the Old Covenant and the Apostles of the New, as one who, not entering into the kingdom of God himself—(that is, being precluded by premature death, as well as by the nature of his mission, from embracing the full Gospel as it should be inaugurated on the Day of Pentecost)—yet far surpassed in dignity and power the race of the elder Prophets, as one who both heralded and saw the Day of the Son of Man.

It was the purport of all the Prophets, and of the Law of Moses itself, to bear continuous testimony to the coming dispensation. The final point of all was the preaching of John himself, who, if they would but endeavour to understand the Scripture aright, was that Elias who was prophesied to come. He was not indeed the Elijah of the Old Covenant revived,

[1] Luke vii. 26, 27.

as the Pharisees wrongly by their carnal views interpreted the prophecy of Malachi, but one who came in his spirit and power to work a reformation corresponding to what the first Elijah had effected in times of similar apostasy and degeneracy in Israel. But it was only they who had ears willing to listen to and receive the truth, who could enter into the meaning of His words.

While Jesus was still at Nain, He received an invitation from a wealthy Pharisee, named Simon, to partake of his hospitality. He did not hesitate to accept the offer; and, with His disciples, repaired to Simon's house at the hour of the principal daily meal.

When Jesus entered the house He was followed, as usual, by a crowd of anxious and inquisitive attendants, whom, though uninvited, the owner of the house, possibly in accordance with general custom on occasions of festivity, did not think it necessary to debar from witnessing, though not sharing in, the festal scene.

It was but a short time after He had entered the house, that the whole village knew that He was the guest of Simon the Pharisee.

The repast had for some time proceeded, when a woman entered, unhappily but too well known in the village. Evil and notorious as was her character, it seems that the proverbial hospitality of the East, to which allusion has already been made, could not, upon such an occasion, refuse her admission[2]. Passing along outside the line of guests, as they lay recumbent round the sides of the central table, while the feet lay exposed

[2] "In the primitive ages of the world there were no public inns or taverns, In those days the voluntary exhibition of hospitality to one who stood in need of it was highly honourable. The glory of an open-hearted and generous hospitality continued even after public inns were erected, and continues even to this day in the East.—Job xxii. 7; Gen. xviii. 3—9; Matt. xxv. 35; Mark ix. 41."—Jahn, Bibl. A., p. 159.

upon the extremities of the couches upon which they rested, she halted at the back of the couch whereon Jesus lay at the banquet of the rich and self-satisfied Pharisee. There, unnoticed, as she believed and wished, she drew forth an alabaster box, such as the chief women of the day were wont to keep their precious perfumes in; and, as the tears of a deep and utter humiliation rained down her cheeks, she bowed her head over the holy feet above which she leant, until that torrent, welling up from the very streams of her broken heart, poured over the feet of One whom she acknowledged as the Lord and Master of her life. Then, as that costly heart-rain washed the "beautiful feet" of that Glorious Messenger of Heaven, the poor daughter of earth, in her shame and grief still rising into a higher region of faith and hope, drew down the mantling tresses of her heaven-gifted adornment, and with the glory of her woman's head, sinking upon her knees, wiped those Divine feet that had not refused the homage of her tears. Then from that box of precious ointment, in which the costly myrrh of Arabia had been preserved distilled, for which the price of many a sin had mayhap been bartered, she poured the coveted oil of perfume, the treasure of many a Jewish lady, on those revered feet. As she did so, the passion of a new life burst forth from the sinking form. Lowlier as she sank at the base of that honoured couch, so higher rose within her soul the consciousness of a redemption which had lifted her from despair to an everlasting hope. Oh, wondrous riddle of Divinity! that they who have lowest fallen should by the very power that caused the fall be raised to life and hope anew!

The Pharisee Simon had marked the woman's action. And he watched with his Pharisaic eye the conduct of his Guest. What would He do? How would He endure the touch—the defilement of contact with this wretched creature? Would He repel her as a serpent from His touch, or would He not?

As the ungenerous thought was passing through his mind, Jesus suddenly addressed His discourteous host. "Simon," said the despised visitor, "I have somewhat to say unto thee." The Pharisee, nowise disconcerted, and perhaps only too well pleased to have his curiosity satisfied by an address from Jesus, answered, readily, "Master, say on!" By a very short parable Jesus then brought him to an acknowledgment of the true state of things regarding his own spiritual condition and that of the woman; an acknowledgment, however, made in ignorance, at the time, of the point to which the remarks of Jesus were tending.

That this incident is not, and cannot be, identical with that mentioned by the other three Evangelists[3] is apparent from many considerations. The following points of contrast between them are worthy of note:—

According to S. Luke,—

1. The occurrence took place at *Nain*.

According to SS. Matthew, Mark, and John,—

2. It took place at Bethany.

S. L. the house is that of Simon the Pharisee.

SS. M. M. and J. the house is that of Simon the Leper.

1. No word of price is mentioned.
2. The value is given at 300 pence.
1. The nature of the perfume is not specified.
2. The perfume is mentioned as spikenard.
1. The woman is a sinner.
2. The woman is Mary the sister of Martha.
1. The anointing is done in contrition.
2. The anointing is done for His burial[4].
1. Jesus rebukes the Pharisee for discourtesy, and relates the Parable in the text.

[3] Matt. xxvi. 6—13; Mark xiv. 3—9; John xii. 2—8.

[4] Matt. xxvi. 12.

2. Jesus rebukes Judas for avarice and envy, and *prophesies the eternal memory* of the act.

1. The incident in S. Luke must have taken place in the spring or summer of A.D. 28.

2. That in the three others belongs to the sixth day (according to S. John[5]) before the last Passover, in A.D. 30.

The only points in common are, in fact, the anointing by a woman, and the name of the host. How little can be inferred from such mere coincidences may be judged from the common use of such perfumes for similar purposes, and from the frequent recurrence of the name Simon in the Gospels. There were *two Simons* among the *Twelve Apostles.* (See p. 280.)

The Roman Church has identified the woman who was "a sinner" with Mary Magdalene "out of whom went seven devils." It is to be observed, however, that demoniacal possession does not in every case seem to have involved a special state of previous sinfulness. And, if it were so, it is somewhat singular that in the very next chapter of S. Luke she is especially mentioned as one of the women in attendance upon Jesus, in company apparently with others of some good position and affluence, without a hint of her having been the person alluded to but a few verses previously. All that can be said of the identity is, that it is not impossible. But the probabilities are decidedly against the supposition.

[5] John xii. 1.

NOTE ON THE FEAST IN S. JOHN v. 1.

THE controversy regarding the number of Passovers which are comprised within the ministry of Jesus is nearly as old as the Gospels themselves; and cannot be passed over here without notice.

Whatever may have been the opinions of extreme writers in past times, there can be no question that the subject is now narrowed down to the alternative of *three* or *four* Passovers. For none can deny that at least three distinct feasts of Pascha are mentioned specially by S. John in ii. 13, vi. 4, and xii. 1, xiii. 1. The only question is now, whether the ἑορτὴ τῶν Ἰουδαίων in v. 1 is also to be considered a Passover or not.

There are two ways of arguing this question: the one from the requirements of time, and the other from the *usus loquendi* of the Evangelists. In either way it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the feast v. 1 was the Passover itself; and that the place which it occupies in the Gospel History is that of *second* in the year A.D. 28, and intermediate, therefore, between the feast of A.D. 27, mentioned in S. John ii. 13, and that of 29, to which Jesus *did not* go up, specified in vi. 4.

Those whose studies of the N. T. are not directed solely to the individual Gospels considered by themselves, but who regard the whole four as necessary to be harmonized together in order to arrive at a clear connexion of all the events recorded, and their proper succession, and who, moreover, recognize the true position of S. John's work as strictly supplementary to the rest,

will have no difficulty in perceiving one necessary conclusion, which is that the events in S. Mark ii.—vi. and S. Luke vi.—ix. 10, cannot possibly be referred to any other period than the year intervening midway between the Passovers of A.D. 27 and A.D. 29.

In no other way can the accounts be reconciled, and within no shorter period of time can the events be comprised, than in that which is thus included between S. John v., S. Mark ii. 23, and S. Luke vi. 1 (which follow), and S. Mark vi. 56, and S. Luke ix. 10.

For the other part of the argument the following will suffice as a demonstrative proof:—

"The feast, S. John v. 1, must have been one of the three great feasts, (1) because of the addition, *and Jesus went up to Jerusalem*, i. e. He went up in consequence of that feast; (2) no other feast is called "*a feast of the Jews*," i. e. one binding upon all. The Dedication-feast and the Feast of Purim were not of obligation, and the Feast of Purim was kept any where. (Jos. Ant. xi. 6, end). (3) The first Passover had been spoken of, a few verses before, as *the feast*, (iv. 45, twice). Had a different feast been intended, it would have been specified. (4) The Passover alone is spoken of in the Gospels as *the feast* (S. Matt. xxvi. 5; xxvii. 15. S. Mark xv. 6. S. Luke ii. 42; xxiii. 17. S. John, above). The Feast of Tabernacles is named, S. John vii. 2. 'Since the Jews held the Pascha to be the special and first feast, the Evangelist at times defines it further, *The Pascha, the feast of the Jews, was nigh;* at times not, *there* was Pascha, feast of the Jews' (Chron. P. p. 406). S. Irenæus adds, *the* Pascha (ii. 22. 3). Cod. Sinait. has the article. (5) The events in S. John ii. 23—iv. 54, require more space than from Pascha to the Feast of Tabernacles. (6) The words, *there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest* (S. John iv. 35), imply that the next feast was Pascha. The assumption that

the feast (S. John v. 1) was the Feast of Purim [2], has nothing in its favour, and is excluded by Süsskind's argument (n. 6), and by grounds 1. 2. 3. 5. Hengstenberg notices, in addition, that the Feast of Purim was celebrated in such sort that our Lord would not have been present at it, and that it was not held on the Sabbath, whereas the festival, S. John v., included the Sabbath." Pusey on Daniel, p. 175, *note:* see also Hengstenberg on S. John, i. 253—256.

[2] Against the Feast of Purim being that intended by S. John v. 1, see Hengstenberg's Christology, iii. 246, sqq.

CHAPTER III.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT SIX MONTHS, FROM THE SECOND CIRCUIT OF GALILEE IN MAY, TO THE SECOND VISIT TO NAZARETH IN NOVEMBER, A.D. 28.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

SECT. 1.—Third general circuit of Galilee, and return to Capernaum—Teaching by Parables—Quelling of the storm—The Gadarene demoniacs.

SECT. 2.—Return to Capernaum—Healing of Jairus' daughter and others—Second visit to Nazareth—Note A, on the Brethren of Jesus—Note B, on S. Matt. viii. 19—22.

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. Matt.	S. Mark.	S. Luke.	S. John.
...	iii. 19	viii. 1— 3	...
...	20—21	...	...
xii. 22—45	22—30	...	...
46—50	31—35	...	...
xiii. 1—52	iv. 1—34	4—18	...
...	...	19—21	...
53	...	...	...
viii. 18—25	35—38	22—24	...
26—34	39—v. 1—20	25—39	...
ix. 1	...	...	...
10—34	v. 21—43	40—56	...
xiii. 54—58	vi. 1— 6	...	...

SECTION I.

THE visit to Nain, which has occupied a conspicuous place in the course of the preceding history, was apparently made on the occasion of Jesus setting out from Capernaum on the Second General Circuit of Galilee. It was the first place at which He halted; and it would seem to have been chosen by S. Luke for the purpose of giving a kind of specimen of the difficulties by which He was ordinarily met on His travels, and of the mode in which His wisdom enabled Him to surmount them. The Evangelist's reason for the selection of Nain in particular was probably the working of the great miracle upon the widow's son, and the message of John the Baptist regarding His claims to be the Messiah. How long this circuit actually occupied we have no direct information, nor indeed does any Evangelist, except S. Luke, even allude to the fact at all. Such a journey, however, undertaken with such objects, and conducted in such a manner, could not (having regard to the extreme populousness of Galilee) have required less than from three to four months. Jesus would, therefore, upon this supposition, have returned to Capernaum by about the middle or end of October. With this hypothesis proceeding upon the calculation of the time of year (independently arrived at) from which He must have set out originally upon His journey, the accounts of S. Matthew and S. Mark, which here come in to take up the narrative, singularly agree. For if, according to His acknowledged habit, Jesus in addressing the multitudes upon His return by parables drew His illustrations from objects of sight, and the passing occurrences of daily life, it must have been the autumn of the year, after the conclusion of the Feast

of Tabernacles, when He spoke the parable of the Sower and his seed. For then it would be just six months before the ingathering of the barley harvest at the Passover; and the fields newly dug and prepared since the wheat harvest of Pentecost, and the general vintage and fruit-gathering which preceded the Tabernacle Festival, would be just in order again for the reception of the seed which was to produce the harvest of the following year.

The mission which Jesus now undertook was seemingly for the purpose of accustoming the Twelve (who, as we have seen, had been fully and solemnly ordained for the purpose some six months before) to the kind of life they would have to lead, and of giving them the benefit of His own personal example to guide them in their future missionary labours. As the journey was one of unusual importance and extent, we find that He was accompanied on this occasion by certain women, all of whom had experienced His beneficial kindness in the healing of terrible bodily infirmities, and who now were but too thankful to be suffered to testify their gratitude for His mercies. They accompanied Him, therefore, henceforth generally in His retinue, for the purpose of providing the meals and other necessaries which, owing to the nature of His work, neither He, nor probably His disciples, were able to provide for themselves.

The names of the women which are recorded are those of Joanna the wife (most likely *the widow*) of Chuza, the Steward or Lord Chamberlain of Herod's household; a woman named Susannah; and especially that Mary of Magdala, of whom mention has already been made in passing, of whose previous history we know nothing except that out of her, at His bidding, there had departed "seven devils."

"The short account," says an admirable Dutch commentator upon this passage, "given of these women is peculiarly adapted

to assist our imagination in picturing the manner of our Lord's journeyings in Galilee. We seem to see Him going from town to town, clad in His simple but decent garments; His coat without seam, woven from the top throughout—perhaps a gift of love; His feet bound with sandals; His disciples about Him, without money in their purses, without shoes, staff, or scrip (?)—a bottle of oil, perhaps, hanging from their shoulders, according to Eastern custom, for the refreshment of their wearied limbs (Mark vi. 13; Luke x. 34; Gen. xxviii. 18); and, at a fitting distance, the company of women covered with veils, after the fashion of the country, caring with tender love for the wants of the party—preparing from time to time some unexpected refreshment for the beloved Master, and conversing, sometimes with Him, sometimes with each other[1]."

From the departure from Nain (the first place, as we have seen, visited by Jesus on this Great Circuit) to the return to Capernaum there is a blank in the narratives of the Evangelists. S. Luke alone mentions the fact of the circuit itself, together with those miracles by which its first outset was characterized; and with the circumstances which marked His progress he closes his note of these particular proceedings. The inference from the occasional and partial silence of the sacred historians is manifestly that the cases which they have actually recorded (1) were typical of their class, or (2) that they constituted some especial nucleus around which the teaching of Jesus was gathered, or (3) that they were the points from which certain crises in His ministerial course are to be dated. It may be assumed, in the present instance, that there was little or nothing in the reception which the teaching of Jesus met with in the other towns or villages of Galilee which differed typically or essentially from that which had been recorded in Nain[1], and in the other neighbouring places, or

[1] Oosterzee, i. 257.

which affected in any substantial manner the development of His ministerial career.

CAPERNAUM. OCTOBER, A.D. 28.

To Capernaum, then, Jesus returned at some time in the October of A.D. 28, and straightway made for His own home, which, as we have seen, was now, as it had long been, in the house of Peter. In the frequent intercourse which subsisted between the different villages of Galilee, communication was also rapidly carried on; and when Jesus returned to Capernaum there were many who were aware of His approach. The retinue, also, by which He was now accompanied was quite enough to excite attention; and hence, when His arrival was once witnessed and made known throughout the town, the people thronged to the house in which He dwelt in such multitudes, anxious to derive benefit from His healing powers, or to hear His marvellous words of exhortation, that there was no time or opportunity for the wearied party to obtain a meal.

The news of the popular excitement speedily reached the ears of the mother and relatives of Jesus, who were now, in order to be near Him, living in Capernaum. They became at last seriously alarmed regarding Him. He had been for some time incessantly engaged, with apparent utter disregard of His health and safety, in preaching and ministering to all classes of persons in all parts of the country, and must undoubtedly stand in need of rest and quiet for some little time to come. And not only were they seriously disturbed on these grounds, but their apprehensions had become greatly excited by the danger He had incurred by His repeated collisions with the Pharisaic body. They were convinced that He was really "beside Himself," as the A. V. very aptly renders the ἐξέστη of S. Mark. In other words, they were alarmed at the

hold which His strong religious enthusiasm seemed to have acquired over Him. They feared not only that He was neglecting all the ordinary requirements of health, but that He was rapidly bringing Himself to that condition in which a religious fervour is little removed from positive mental derangement. On hearing the present news, therefore, they decided to proceed to the house, and endeavour by gentle force to remove Him to their own home, where He could be properly and efficiently tended and watched against the dangers of excessive labour and undue excitement.

It happened that, just at that time, probably while they were on the way to the house, a poor demoniac was brought into His presence, who had been rendered blind and dumb by his terrible affliction. Jesus immediately healed the poor suffering creature, to the amazement of the people who witnessed the instantaneous recovery of sight and speech by the lately possessed one. The case of this demoniac seems to have been an unusually strong one, both from the singular mode in which the possession showed itself, in the simulation of a natural affection, and in the power and malignity of the demon himself; for the demoniac was apparently brought by the people, as a well-known case, for the exercise of the miraculous powers which Jesus was known to possess. The result of so mighty an exertion of power was to influence the people at once with the belief that He who wielded it must be the Messiah they looked for, the veritable Son of David. It is not unlikely that they may have been anxious on this His first appearance amongst them since His departure for the circuit, which began at Nain, to witness some more decisive miracle than they had themselves hitherto actually witnessed, in order to confirm a growing belief that the Messiah, the Son of David, was really come amongst them.

The Pharisees and Scribes who had been sent down from

Jerusalem to watch the movements and dog the footsteps of Jesus, soon heard of the popular excitement and its cause, and were quickly on the spot, with the intention of counteracting the tide of belief that had begun so strongly to set in towards Him. They could not deny the fact of the great miracle that had just been wrought, and the only alternative was to discredit the agency by which it had been accomplished. They gave out that He only succeeded in casting out demons by the aid of Beel-zebub, the chief or prince of devils. It is a striking instance of the bitterness of the hatred which these men bore to Jesus, that they did not condescend to employ the true name, Beel-*Zebul*, which actually means "Prince of Demons," but must change it into that of the Philistine idol, the "God of Flies." Before, however, the shameful calumny was even actually uttered, Jesus, knowing their thoughts and intention, called them to Him, and gently and mercifully reasoned with them upon the palpable inconsistency of their charge, and the terrible danger into which their blind and malignant hostility to Himself was fast hurrying them. He reminded them that a kingdom divided against itself must inevitably be brought to desolation; that families and cities, of which the members were arrayed against each other in enmity, could not possibly stand. The same argument must equally hold good in the case of the spiritual kingdom "If Satan cast out Satan," he is divided against himself, and his kingdom could not therefore continue. Moreover, even were it true that the aid of Beelzebub were necessary to Himself in order to cast out demons, by whose aid did their own exorcists profess to do the same? To be consistent, they must apply the same argument to them. But if He cast out demons by the power of the Spirit of God, which was manifestly proved by the manner in which He wrought those marvellous cures, then they might infer that of a certainty the reign of God's kingdom had come

suddenly upon them, when they were but little prepared to expect it[2].

It is also to be inferred from the subsequent words that Jesus warns the Pharisees against that complicity with Satan which is implied and proved by their obstinate hostility to Himself. The transition to the following terrible denunciations is best understood when this declaration of complicity with the powers of evil is clearly perceived. "Wherefore," said Jesus, in terms of the most awful denunciation, as the only mode of arousing these men to a sense of the imminent peril in which they stood, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come[3]." This terrible denunciation, S. Mark states, was called forth from Jesus by this last exhibition of the extent to which deliberate malice could carry His adversaries. By His previous argument He had pointed out that the suggestion which they had made of Satanic agency on His part, with the view of counteracting and destroying His influence with the people, had been framed in direct opposition to their own better knowledge, and the warnings of their own conscience. In order to awaken their minds to the full sense of the fearful peril in which they stood, He now lays down the point beyond which the infinite mercy of God cannot travel or reach. And it is no contradiction in terms to say that there is, or can be, any limit placed to that which is

[2] "As in 1 Thess. iv. 15, so here, the term ἔφθασεν must be taken in its true meaning: 'It has come upon you in a sudden manner by surprise, and finds you unprepared.' The statement also implied that Jesus stood before them as the Messiah."—Lange, i. 446.

[3] Matt. xii. 31, 32; cf. also Mark iii. 28,29.

infinite or boundless. Where there is a deliberate refusal to see the hand of God, and (more awful still) a perversion of all moral feeling leading to identify light with darkness—the works of God with those of Satan—the condition of such persons is desperate. They "commit moral suicide[4]," and turn the light within them into darkness. Of them indeed might the great heathen moralist have been unconsciously treating when he wrote the words, Ἔστι δ' ὁ μὲν ἀκόλαστος, ὥσπερ ἐλέχθη, οὐ μεταμελητικός· ἐμμένει γὰρ τῇ προαιρέσει. And in contrast with such cases may be placed that of the woman in Nain, which was a sinner, as an example of that ἀκρασία which is curable, because it is capable of repentance; ὁ δ' ἀκρατὴς μεταμελητικὸς πᾶς·—ὁ μὲν ἀνίατος, ὁ δ' ἰατός[5]. "In the intemperate the moral principle is destroyed, the voice of conscience silenced, the light which is within him is become darkness. He does not even feel that he is wrong; he is like a man suffering from a chronic disease, which is so much the more dangerous and incurable because it is painless. Pain has ceased; mortification, so to speak, has begun[6]."

By the time that Jesus had concluded these terrible sayings, His relatives arrived; and, not wishing to make any public exhibition of their object, remained outside the house, while they despatched a message to Him expressing their anxious desire to see and speak to Him. Jesus would not, however, suffer His ministerial labours to be interrupted by the calls even of family affection; and, on receiving the message, publicly declared, as He stretched forth His hand over His disciples, that His mother and brethren were already with Him, inasmuch as whosoever was prepared to do the will of His Father which is in Heaven stood to Him in the light of His nearest and dearest relatives. The chief object which He

[4] Lange on S. Matt., i. 448. [5] Aristotle, Eth. Nic., l. vii. c. 8.
[6] Browne's Tr. of Arist Ethics, p. 196, Bohn's ed.

had in view in thus speaking was, it may be believed, to show that "in disregarding the claims of private duty, He was obeying the claims of public; He was only sacrificing an inferior to a superior obligation[7]."

BORDERS OF THE SEA OF TIBERIAS. MORNING.

It was now apparently between nine and ten o'clock in the morning, when Jesus, accompanied still by His disciples, quitted the house and repaired to the borders of the lake, where, as has been already noticed, He was accustomed frequently to address the multitudes. The crowd was now so great that He entered into one of the fishing-boats (probably that which was kept for His use on such occasions), and began to teach the people from the deck. This is the first occasion on which we find Him resorting to the method of teaching by parables. The first and one of the most striking which He delivered was that of the Sower sowing his Seed, which is recorded by all the three Synoptists. Jesus was now sitting upon the deck of the little fishing-vessel, a few yards from the shore, facing the multitude, who were thickly gathered upon the water's edge, with the background of the sloping hills of Galilee rising up gently from the broad expanse of pebbly shore that fringed the inland lake. There as He sat, His eye would light upon the frequent gorges in the hill sides, through which would be visible the "undulating cornfield descending to the water's edge. There was the trodden pathway running through the midst of it, with no fence or hedge to prevent the seed from falling here and there on either side of it, or upon it; itself hard with the constant tramp of horse and mule and human feet. There was the 'good' rich soil which distinguishes the whole of that plain and its neighbourhood from

[7] Greswell, Harm., ii. p. 334.

the bare hills elsewhere descending into the lake, and which, where there is no interruption, produces one vast mass of corn. There was the rocky ground of the hillside protruding here and there through the cornfields, as elsewhere through the grassy slopes. There were the large bushes of thorn—the 'nabk'—springing up, like the fruit-trees of the more inland parts, in the very midst of the waving wheat[8]."

As He finished the parable, the disciples, to whom also this mode of teaching was entirely new, were at a loss to understand the reason of this sudden change. They came, therefore, from where they were sitting apart according to custom so as to leave their Master free, with the request that He would inform them of the reason of His speaking in this novel way. Jesus replied that His reason was that it was not designed that the mysteries, that is, the revelation of the hitherto unknown doctrines of the Gospel, should be explained to any but to those who were willing to become His disciples. There is a condition of heart which must first exist, or be arrived at, before He will speak plainly of those truths. Men became disciples of Him by the power of love, and by a certain pre-existent moral and intellectual aptitude. In the outer world this disposition and moral fitness did not exist, and there was no claim upon a deeper revelation, which would not have been comprehended had it been given. Where a man *has* already, more shall be given; where he has not, even that which he hath (i. e. in the case of the Jews, the shadow of the law called by S. Luke viii. 18, "*that which he seemeth to have*") shall be taken away, and no substitute be granted.

Turning then to the multitude again, Jesus resumed His teaching by parables. In the one which He had just delivered He had shown by the visible fact around them of the nature of the ground where the sower was at work, the different capa-

[8] Stanley's "Sinai," p. 426.

cities of men, according to the several classes of their natures, for the reception of the Gospel. He next proceeds to show, by an allegory taken from the same outward circumstance, the difficulty and obstructions which would meet the Gospel in its progress, and the dispensation which God would adopt regarding their removal. This was the parable of the Tares (the Arabic *Zmwān*, the ζιζάνια of the New Testament, and the Roman *lolium*, according to Jerome) which grew among the wheat, and, being almost undistinguishable from it except in maturity (when it is, as a wheat, of course barren), is suffered to remain until the harvest, when, as the emblem of the bad and unproductive (ἄργοι ?), it is gathered out and burnt.

The remainder of this group of parables, five in number in all [9], have all reference to the growth and mode of operation of the Gospel in the hearts of men. Four of them are taken from this one and the same source of illustration, and one from the operation of leaven in the making of bread from the ripened ears.

CAPERNAUM. HOUSE OF SIMON. AFTERNOON OF THE SAME DAY.

At the conclusion of this novel address, which, it may be well conceived, was highly calculated, from its peculiarly Oriental form, to arrest the attention of hearers, and excite them to further and more earnest inquiry, Jesus dismissed the multitude, and returned at the hour of the usual noon-day's meal into His own residence in the town. For the remainder of that day He secluded Himself from popular observation,

[9] They are, 1. The sower and his seed; 2. The wheat and the tares; 3. The grain of mustard-seed; 4. The leaven in the bushel of meal; 5. The seed's silent growth.

The second set are, 1. The treasure in the field; 2. The pearl of great price; 3. The net cast into the sea. These three, with Nos. 1—4 of the first set, are given by S. Matthew. S. Mark agrees with this evangelist in 1 and 3. 5 peculiar to S. Mark.

though the house still remained beset, as before, by the multitudes who had watched His return home. It was while He was thus in seclusion in the quiet of His own home, that the disciples came to Him with the request that He would explain to them the meaning of the two parables of the Sower and the Tares. This request He at once granted, adding also three parables, or rather perhaps illustrated remarks, as to the paramount importance of the Gospel in the eyes of those who comprehended its true nature and purport.

He had perhaps hardly finished His explanations when word was again brought to Him that His mother and brethren were waiting in anxiety to see Him, but that the crush round the doors was so great that it was impossible for them to reach Him. His reply was in kindred terms to what He had before used, that His mother and His brethren were those (then present with Him) which heard the word of God[1], and put it into practice. He could not, in other words, suffer the work which He had in hand to be put aside and interrupted for merely human considerations, when there were those around Him who were ready to be about His Father's business.

EMBARKATION ON THE SEA OF TIBERIAS. EVENING OF THE SAME DAY.

It was now evening; the sun had set, and the following (Jewish) day had begun when Jesus left His home for the second time in that day, and proceeded again to the edge of the inland sea. Of His intentions or motives in so doing we have no precise information. But it is plainly stated that the multitudes who had been waiting about in the neighbourhood of His home, by the usual place of His resort on the seaside, now again thronged Him to that degree that He desired His disciples to set sail and make for the opposite shore of the

[1] Luke viii. 21.

lake. As He was embarking for the little voyage, a certain scribe came forward out of the crowd actuated seemingly, as in the case of most impulsive natures, by a sudden fit of enthusiasm, the growth, it may be, of the morning's words of Jesus, and professed his readiness to follow Him whithersoever He was going. One almost seems to behold Jesus preparing to embark in the little vessel, as the sun went down, and the deep gloom from the hills came over the fair face of that inland lake, reading the mind of the eager but hardly resolute scribe, and with pathetic allusion to the coming night, and His own preparation to pass it on the rough deck of the little ship, saying that "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests (roosts), but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head[2]." There was another of His usual disciples whom He had bidden on this occasion to follow Him, but who urged the request that he might be allowed first to go and bury his father. But Jesus gave him at once an insight into the peremptory demands which the Gospel makes upon the self-denial and renunciation of its followers. "Follow Me," He said, "and let the dead bury their dead[3]."

SEA OF TIBERIAS. NIGHT.

Having at length succeeded in dispersing the multitude which had followed them to the water's edge, they set out for the opposite shore of Peræa, and made for the coast of Gergesa. They had made no preparation for the journey, for Jesus had His reasons for desiring to depart at once and speedily. Possibly there may have been some manifestation of a desire to make Him king, from which, as was the case on a subsequent occasion, nothing but an immediate withdrawal would avail to save Him. As it was, there were other small vessels which

[2] Matt. viii. 20.

[3] Matt. viii. 22. See note B at the end of the chapter.

put out to sea with Him, and followed, at least for some part of the distance, in His track. It was night or late in the evening when He embarked; and, wearied with the incessant labours of the day, He fell asleep where He lay in the stern, with His head resting on the pillow[4]. It was His intention to pass the night upon the lake, for though the distance to the south-eastern point at which He designed to land was not more than seven miles, still it would take some hours to accomplish the distance in a heavy row-boat. Some little time after they had set out, a sudden storm burst over the face of the lake. Down the gorges of the hills which fringe the western side came one of those violent gusts of wind which, as is so commonly the case in these mountain waters, lashed the surface in a few minutes into a state of furious agitation. It was a violent and sudden squall, driving the waves before it in surf-covered crests until they broke against the sides of the little vessel, and threatened rapidly to swamp her. She filled quickly; and in great alarm the disciples went aft, where their Master was still calmly sleeping, undisturbed by the commotion of wind and wave, and hurriedly implored Him to save them from the instant destruction with which they were menaced. Aroused from sleep, Jesus asked them how it was they could not trust to His presence with them as a guarantee for their safety? "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith[5]?" Then in His majesty the Lord of Creation arose and rebuked the furious wind that as the active agent of the tempest had stirred the foaming waters, and spoke to the heaving sea, "Peace, be still!" As the words rose from His lips, the warring elements were tilled. Like a fiend rebuked, the angry tempest passed away the howling wind was hushed, the tossing waves bowed their whitened crest, and the lake lay still and moveless beneath

[4] Τὸ προσκεφάλαιον, i.e. in all probability, the steersman's cushion.

[5] Matt. viii 26.

the glance of its Creator. The storm was stilled upon the moment; and, turning to the awed disciples, who beheld with the wonder of a great fear the power that raised the dead now master the inanimate forces of nature, He asked in reproachful accents how it was that after all they had witnessed, they were so fearful then? how it was that they had no real faith[6]? In silent awe, humbled and abashed, they could but gaze upon each other, and whisper their mutual wonder, "What manner of man (*Being*) was this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him[7]?"

DISTRICT OF GERGESA (KHERSA). EARLY MORNING. OCTOBER.

It was early morning when the boat reached the south-eastern point from which Jesus intended to enter into Peræa. The spot where He actually landed appears not to have been on the southern road to Gadara itself, which was a strong fortified city and the capital of Peræa; but a place on the eastern side almost fronting Tiberias, and distant about seven geographical miles from Capernaum[8]. The place of landing is called by Matt. (viii. 28) "the Country of the Gergesenes," which identifies the particular district of which Gadara was the governing city, N. of "where the steep lofty bank of the eastern plateau breaks down into the plain of the Jordan[9]." As Jesus landed, a wretched demoniac, afflicted with the most malignant form of that dreadful disorder, observed, from the distant heights that commanded the view of the sea, His approach. According to S. Matthew, there were two of these unhappy beings, who, shunning the contact and neighbourhood of man, had cast off the clothing of civilized humanity, and taken up their abode in

[6] It is clear that the words of Jesus preserved by S. Matt. were spoken *before*, and those in S. Mark's Gospel *after* the stilling of the tempest.

[7] Mark iv. 14.

[8] But see Stanley's "Sinai," p. 381.

[9] Smith's Dict. of B., Art. "Gadara."

the tombs which skirted the road leading to the height above the ravine, at the foot of which the boat was moored. Of all the instances mentioned in the Gospels, these two cases, especially the more prominent one selected by S. Mark and S. Luke for record, appear to have been the most violent and desperate. His usual place of abode was in the congenial solitude and wildness of the rocky ravine, where, amongst the tombs that are hewn out of the rocks by the wayside in the strong limestone cliffs, his cries would scare the traveller, as in his ungovernable fits he would cut and maim himself with the sharp stones that lay broken from the basaltic formations scattered in the neighbourhood of the village. As the wretched patient beheld Jesus, he rushed down to meet Him, whether with his usual ferocious hostility to man or not we are not informed. It may well have been so, for as he neared the little band, Jesus, addressing the spiritual power by which he was possessed, commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. The words for the moment seemed to increase the paroxysm under which the poor creature laboured, and rushing up to where Jesus stood, he flung himself upon his face, and in piteous and abject tones, as identifying himself with the evil power by which he was governed and tormented, besought Jesus not to torture him more.

The circumstances of the cure of this being are amongst the most peculiar and extraordinary of all which meet us in the Evangelical narrative. The confusion of identity between the sufferer himself and the evil power by which he was controlled is nowhere else so apparent as it is here, even amongst the frequent cases of this mysterious malady which meet us in the Gospels. There was also something very peculiar in this individual seizure which seems to have actuated Jesus in the mode of working the cure, lest a too sudden and peremptory command should endanger the vital force of a frame whose power

was not normally acquired, but supernaturally induced with no doubt great danger to the physical being of the patient. Addressing Himself, therefore, to the possessed man, Jesus enlisted his attention at once by His evident sympathy with his condition. "What is thy name?" He asked, as though the man were possessed simply by a distorted fancy, and appealing to that very notion of his by which he had endeavoured to prevail upon Jesus not to torment *him* before the time. The sufferer answered at once that his name was "Legion, for we are many;" according to the Mark-Peter Gospel; and this is of consequence as showing the view in which it was regarded by the foremost of all the witnesses of the scene. S. Luke says that the reason why he gave the name was that "many devils were entered into him." It is clear that there is no contradiction between the two, inasmuch as the former Evangelist gives the reason assigned by the sufferer; the other gives the reason as it actually was, irrespective of any internal or psychical fancy of the erratic mind.

The same divergent points of view, which (as will hereafter be shown) are of infinite value in determining the true *phasis* of this, the governing case of all which we meet with in Scripture, are discoverable in the sequel in the parallel accounts given by the two Evangelists S. Mark and S. Luke. Here it is remarkable that the account of *S. Mark* actually differs from that of *S. Matthew*, with whom he so generally agrees (and which is followed by S. Luke), in that he makes mention of the request of the *man* that Jesus would not send *them* (the demons) away *out of the country*. S. Luke states that the fear was that they would be cast out "into the deep," or abyss, where, according to Jewish belief, the rebellious spirits are confined until the day of judgment.

"Upon the lower slopes of the hills, on those grassy ones which a straining eye can discern even from the

western side[1]," a vast herd of swine were feeding, which had been recently driven out from home in the early autumnal morning to their usual pasture. The neighbourhood was Gentile; but there were many Jews, traders and others, who had become settled in the place. Into these animals, *unclean*, and therefore *prohibited by the Jewish Law* to be kept as articles of commerce or food, the unclean spirits that had possession of the man begged that, if cast out of him, they might have permission to enter. Jesus, however, simply said "Begone!" (ὑπάγετε), when forthwith, animated by some horrid impulse, the whole herd rushed violently down the slope of the cliff, and perished in the sea.

The keepers of the herd, who had been witnesses of the entire mysterious transaction, seized with terror at the consequences of the permission which they had heard given to the demons, hastily fled from the spot; and, hurrying into the city, spread the extraordinary tidings abroad regarding the cure of the possessed man and its sequel. The whole population in agitation and alarm then issued forth *en masse* to behold for themselves the person who had done these things, and to satisfy their own minds as to the reality of the facts which had been communicated to them. On their arrival, they found the man so recently the terror of the neighbourhood, now decently clad (probably by the loan of a garment belonging to one of the disciples) and in possession of his perfect mind. A great fear and awe fell upon them all, as they witnessed this so lately fierce and untamable maniac sitting peacefully and humbly as a learner at the feet of his Preserver, while the whole herd of swine, the abomination of the Jews, had been by some hidden power swept from their well-known pasture. But the awe these people felt was not the wholesome fear which leads to humble and patient consideration of the lesson taught by such

[1] Stanley's "Sinai," p. 381.

wondrous works. It was the dread and aversion inspired by the actions of One, of whose *power* indeed they had evidence more than enough, but which they lacked the understanding to associate with a true deed of mercy and compassion. "Still while full of fear in the presence of One who was able to perform such mighty acts, in this divine power they recognized His *right*, and therefore submitted to His will[1]." And this is the only right way of looking at the act of Jesus. It was a question probably of the life of a man and the salvation of a human soul, aganist the existence of a herd of unclean beasts.

"The soul of one virtuous and religious man" (says Bentley in his sermon on the "Origin of the World")" is of greater worth and excellency than the sun and all its planets, and all the stars in the world." Could there be any question between the loss of these miserable swine and that of the afflicted man, of whose condition of soul the Saviour must have been the perfect Judge? Can any one hesitate for a moment as to which alternative was to be preferred, or would any great and benevolent *man* pause for one moment as to the course to pursue, were it placed *within his own power* to make election between the two? *Supposing*, however, the destruction of the herd of swine by One who claimed to be the *Creator of all things*, could such an exercise of unquestioned right be regarded in any light than that of any other visitation by which, in the providence of God, injury or loss is caused to property of individuals, where no compensating benefit is perhaps quite so easily discernible? If the course of the world shows that murrain and plagues do not unfrequently make havoc amongst the flocks and herds of human proprietors, we must be prepared to impugn the justice and goodness of God as irreconcilable with such common occurrences, before any just exception can be taken against the

[1] "Some Christian theologians have taken up the cause of the divine, ed themselves as advocates *invitis Gadarenis*."—Ebrard, p. 254.

act of Jesus in this case. It is to be observed, moreover, that the man who was now healed had long been a terror and a plague to the entire neighbourhood. No man dared pass along that road which he haunted by night and by day, and which, we may infer, was the usual and direct route to the ordinary place of embarcation. Would not the townspeople, as they seem to have shown by their actions, have gladly purchased the removal, or safe custody, of so dreadful a pest at a far higher price than that of the lost herd? When they left the town in a body and came to Jesus, and found the man sitting sane and calm, self-possessed and tranquil, at his Saviour's feet, was one murmur of complaint heard against the course which Jesus had pursued? The man was a dangerous and raving madman; and we can best estimate the value they would set upon his recovery, by considering what would be the state of things in any of our own towns, where a dangerous lunatic was known to be at large, and to defy every effort at his restraint.

But the Gadarenes besought Jesus that He would depart out of their country! No doubt they did. And did not *Peter* once desire Jesus to depart from him, for that he was "a sinful man[3]?" It was the consciousness of the immeasurable distance between themselves and Him which prompted the request, accompanied by the conviction that they stood in the Presence of One who had the power, and might possibly also possess the will, to inflict a punishment upon them for a condition of evil living which they were indisposed to relinquish, which caused them to desire His departure. The facts which they had witnessed had inspired them with dread, not with thankfulness; with aversion, not with love. His presence was a rebuke, and might be a judgment to them. They could not tell what might be the next manifestation of His power. Who or what He might be they perhaps did not know, but they had been

[3] Luke v. 8.

probable, was not covered in, but exposed t
roof would extend as a terrace-walk over the
by the surrounding galleries. They would
position of Jesus exactly, and would witho
the spot just over and in front of Him as He
difficulty in the narrative is the breaking up
cially as S. Luke expressly mentions the pa
"through the tiling;" and S. Mark speaks
"broken up" the roof, a process which to m
unjustifiable. The house, however, at whic
took place was, it must be remembered, the p
in a comparatively humble position in life.
classes of buildings were in most cases cons
in our English county of Devonshire calle
dried mud, mixed with straw to give it consis
in the sun. The outer walls, in fact, of m
formed of this material, which could be ver
through," and again perfectly repaired with
venience to the tenant.

Breaking up, therefore, the light "tiling," o
layers of twigs and earth, they lowered the s
upon his bed down amongst the people in fro
was standing. They had not miscalculated t
would take of their conduct. It had been di
strong natural affection to the relative whos
singularly brought before Him, and also by
ing faith on the part of the whole five in Hi
accede to their implied petition.

Their faith met with its reward. Jesus,
man, who in his strange position lay with

be obtained to it over the roof of another. An ope
over the spot where Jesus was is the less improba
way that the dead were often carried out of the hou

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The obligation of the

[a] Matt. ix. 12.

brought too suddenly into contact with the power of Divinity to embrace the truth as yet. Jesus yielded to their importunities. He did not desire to obtrude Himself upon unwilling hearts, and therefore, all fasting and fatigued as they were, He gave the word to the disciples to return home again across the lake. As He re-entered the boat, the man whom He had healed implored permission to remain with Him and testify by personal service his gratitude and love for his benefactor. But Jesus had other things for him to do. If the people would not hear Himself, through their fears and evil conscience, they might be reached in calmer moments by the testimony of one who had suffered and been redeemed by Him. He consequently desired him to return and "go home to his friends, and tell them how great things THE LORD had done for him, and had had compassion upon him[4]."

The man testified the sincerity of his gratitude by sacrificing the wish of his heart in obedience to the command of his benefactor. He did return, and began to make known, first in his own city, and afterwards throughout all Decapolis, the great mercy he had received. He became, in fact, the first missionary preacher of Jesus to the Gentile world.

SECTION II.

RETURN BY SEA TO CAPERNAUM.

Returning from the coast of Peræa, Jesus and His disciples repaired at once to their own home in Capernaum. They had now been fasting and engaged in laborious work since the midday meal of yesterday, and hence were glad to be able to sit down to a meal again in shelter after the anxious and exciting events of the last eighteen hours.

On their return to land they were met by a crowd of people,

[4] Mark v. 19.

who were anxiously waiting in expectation of seeing Him return; and many, especially "publicans and sinners," were thankful to be allowed the privilege of eating their own meal in the house and in the room where Jesus and the disciples were taking their own refreshment. As access to the court of the house seems not to have been denied to visitors, the Pharisees (i. e. the emissaries of the Sanhedrim) found no difficulty in obtaining admission to the chamber where Jesus sat. As on a former occasion at the house of Levi[5] the Scribes and Doctors had sneeringly asked how He could condescend to the company of such persons, so the Pharisaic spies now instilled their disparaging questions into the ears of the disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" To a demand thus iterated Jesus returned the same reply which He had previously given, that "they which are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick[6]," and he bade them depart and reflect upon the meaning of that passage out of the law for which they professed so much zeal, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," and He repeated that His object and mission was precisely to call to repentance, by tenderness and mercy, those who felt their own condition of sin, and not those who trusted in their own righteousness.

"This prophecy had been brought forward by our Lord on a previous occasion—the plucking of the corn by the disciples on the sabbath (S. Matt. xii. 7). It told plainly that laws of ceremony were not to supersede the obligations of reason and of nature. And it was urged again here with redoubled force upon those who neglected to weigh well the meaning of the former admonition.—By the departure of the body of the Apostles from Jerusalem at the time of publishing that (S. Matthew's) Gospel, solemn intimation was given of the approaching end of the Mosaic Dispensation. The obligation of the

[5] Mark ii. 17; Luke v. 30. [6] Matt. ix. 12.

Jewish Sabbath was now to be loosened, and neither former evil repute nor heathenish practice was to forbid the ministers of Christ's religion from publishing the glad tidings of forgiveness to all alike who were disposed to listen[7]."

The Pharisees were succeeded by some disciples of John the Baptist, who contrasted again their own habits of fasting, in which they coincided with the Pharisaic traditions, with the absence of any such observance on the part of the disciples of Jesus. They had, it will be remembered, put nearly *the same question* through the Scribes on the former occasion, and no more fitting answer could now be given them than the same which had been returned to the other members of their community who had called forth the original answer. If the coincidence of the two dialogues should seem to any one singular or remarkable, it should be remembered that these and such questions were precisely in accordance with the popular feeling and views of the time, and that they were no doubt perpetually recurring on the accidents of opportunity.

Jesus was still in the act of speaking when a certain man, a "ruler of a synagogue[8]" in the town, entered the chamber where Jesus sat at meat and prostrated himself after the usual fashion before Him. The man's distress was great, for he had come to implore aid for one only little daughter of twelve years of age who was now lying upon her deathbed. There was a mixture of ardent hope and simple faith in the man's mind, which was quite enough to enlist on his behalf all the merciful sympathies of Jesus. He did not of course believe in any

[7] Forshall, First twelve chapters of Matthew, p. 82.

[8] "In smaller towns there was often but one Rabbi (Vitringa, p. 57, Tr.): where a fuller organization was possible, there was a College of Elders (πρεσβύτεροι) presided over by one who was ἀρχισυνάγωγος (Chief of the Synagogue). Luke viii. 41, 49; xiii. 14; Acts xviii. 8, 17."—Jahn, B. A., 470. "To these Elders belonged a variety of synonyms, each with a special significance."—Smith's Dict., Art. "Synagogues."

possibility of the revival of his child from death[9]. She was in fact *not dead* when he set out to implore the aid of Jesus, but so hopelessly ill that the conviction on his mind was that there was barely time for Jesus to come and lay His hands upon her, as He had no doubt frequently observed Him do in other cases of dreadful malady. If, however, this could be done, he was persuaded she would be rescued even from the very jaws of death, and therefore he possessed that amount of faith which was sufficiently powerful to enable Jesus to proceed to even greater results than he could possibly have anticipated. "My little daughter," urged the afflicted parent, "lieth at the point of death[1] [she is (must be) even now dead, says S. Matthew], but come and lay Thy hands on her—and she shall live."

It was on His road to the Ruler's house that the singular episode occurred of the woman with the issue of blood surrep titiously touching the hem of the Lord's garment with the belief that there was virtue enough even in such contact as that to heal her. Touching as are the circumstances of the cure, there is only one point which here need be alluded to, which is, the apparent anxiety of Jesus to discover the person who had touched Him. The answer to certain doubts which have been expressed as to His Omniscience in this case is simply that, as in all others, so here, the question as to *who it was*, was intended for the confirmation of the faith of the woman, as well to give her assurance that her recovery was real and permanent, not a mere trick of the imagination produced by the excitement of the moment.

The occurrence just described had, of course, occupied some little time, and this added to the fact of the crowd which had

[9] This is clear not only from the case of such persons as Martha afterwards, but from the words of S. Mark describing the deputation from the house bidding the father not to "trouble the Master" any longer, as the child was now dead.—Mark v. 35, 36.

[1] Mark v. 23.

gathered around Jesus and accompanied Him in His progress through the narrow streets of Capernaum, had delayed Him considerably on His way. At this moment messengers arrived from the chamber of death to tell the grieving father that the girl was dead, and that it was therefore needless to "trouble the Master" any further. As soon as Jesus heard the message, He solemnly desired the afflicted parent not to give way to grief and repining, which would interfere with his newly-awakened faith in Him. "Be not afraid," said Jesus, "*only believe*, and she shall be made whole[2]" On their arrival, the friends and hired minstrels who, according to Jewish custom[3], were already assembled in the house of death, were filling the place with the usual clamorous outcries by which the Orientals have ever been wont to express their grief, real or feigned. Entering the room where these people were assembled, Jesus rebuked them with the tone of authority which was incomprehensible to the people, desiring them to make way for Him, and to cease from the unreasoning and idle clamour they were indulging in. Then, bidding the parents and near relatives of the maiden to stay their tears, He desired the noisy and flippant company to be dismissed; and when the house had resumed its quiet, He took the father and the mother of the maiden, with Peter, James, and John, the only three of the Apostles whom He permitted to be present at the wondrous scene, and with them entered the chamber where the little maid lay sleeping in the calm of actual death. Advancing to the couch, He took her by the hand, saying, "Maid, arise." At the moment, the dead child arose

[2] Mark v. 36, with Luke viii. 50.

[3] "The grief of the Orientals formerly on an occasion of death was, as it is to this day in the East, very extreme. As soon as a person dies, the females in the family with a loud voice set up a sorrowful cry. They continue it as long as they can without taking breath, and the first shriek of wailing dies away in a low sob. After a short space of time they repeat the same cry, and continue it for eight days. There were sometimes employed, such occasions, professed musicians and singers."—Jahn, B. A., 246.

obedient to His word, and stood upon her feet and walked. Amid the wonder, amazement, and joy of all, the Author of Life desired that something should be given her to eat. The weakness of recovered life, it may be, required the aid of bodily sustenance; and perhaps it was desirable to recall the parents from the stupor of intense amazement, or the ecstasy of unbounded joy, to the reality of the awakening, and to divert their minds by the wholesome occupation of the duties of life. It is worthy of notice that S. Mark on this occasion, as again afterwards on that of the miracle upon the deaf man in Decapolis[4], preserves the actual Aramaic words "Talitha, cumi," which Jesus employed on addressing the dead child. They were doubtless dictated by S. Peter, one of the privileged three who were admitted to the higher and deeper manifestations of divine power.

As Jesus quitted the Ruler's house, He was followed by two blind men, who continued importuning Him with persistent cries to have mercy upon them. The Pharisees, however, always upon the alert, were already among them; and regardless of the awful warning they had so lately received, persisted in renewing the charge that the power which enabled Him to cast out demons was derived from their prince himself. In spite, therefore, of the works He had done, and the wonder of the multitude, and even the disposition on the part of many to recognize Him as the Son of David, Capernaum was now no longer a place for Him. Moreover, the action and ceaseless opposition of the Pharisees from Jerusalem began to threaten danger to His personal safety. He broke up therefore shortly after the last miracle from Capernaum, and once more, and for the last time, visited His former home of Nazareth.

[4] Mark vii. 34, see vol. ii. p. 10. "Ephphátha."

NAZARETH. THE SABBATH DAY. NOVEMBER.

Arrived in the village, He entered the Synagogue upon the Sabbath Day, as He had done once before, now nearly a year ago (p. 228), and again addressed the assembled people. There was no disputing the eloquence or the power with which He spoke; but His words fell upon ears that were unhappily closed against the avenues of grace. They did not, however, *now*, as on the former occasion, remark upon the wondrous persuasiveness with which He spoke. Their language was different on this occasion. They expressed astonishment indeed, but it was not at His *gracious language*, but at the *wonderful works* which they knew Him to have performed in Capernaum. "From whence (they asked in some angry temper) hath this man *these things*? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands[5]?" The cause of their indignation was undoubtedly jealousy of the Capernaites, among whom they knew that He had taken up His abode, and wrought His chief miracles. They chose to forget that they had been themselves the cause of His neglecting them by their conduct in previously attempting His life. He had now acquired the fame of a great Prophet; and it was enough for them that they had been, no matter how or why, excluded from any share in the honour which had come upon their Townsman. They asked sneeringly amongst themselves was not this "the *Carpenter*, the Son of Mary[6], the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not His sisters here with us[7]?" They were, in fact, *offended* at Him. They were vexed, indignant, and jealous; and like all persons under such feelings, they transferred the blame from themselves

[5] Mark vi. 2.

[6] An incidental proof that *Joseph* had been some time dead.

[7] On the "Brethren of Jesus," see note A at the end of the chapter.

to the Person whose presence reflected the blame upon them. Jesus reminded them that "a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." The result of their conduct was that there, in His own almost native village, He was absolutely debarred from doing any great work amongst His people. In fact, all He could do was to lay His hands upon a few sick folk, and heal them. So great and obstinate was the unbelief of these Nazarenes, with all the evidence of His past life and acts before them, that Jesus Himself is said by S. Mark, upon the authority of S. Peter, to have "marvelled" at their unbelief[8].

It has been a matter of considerable controversy whether this occurrence is or is not identical with that which has already been described as having taken place at the outset of His ministry, shortly after the first miracle at Cana. (1) It has been considered strange that Jesus should return to the place where so desperate an attempt had been already made upon His life; and (2) that after such a manifestation of hostility He should have been *surprised* at the unbelief of the people. (3) It is observed that the circumstances attending the two descriptions are so closely similar that it is difficult to imagine that they can refer to other than to one and the same event, of which the details present only such variations as are naturally to be expected in the independent accounts of trustworthy witnesses. The preaching upon the Sabbath-day in the Synagogue, the astonishment of the people, and the proverbial allusion by which Jesus replied to their faithless conduct and language appear, especially when taken in connexion with the former considerations, too markedly similar to be referred otherwise than to one and the same event.

Yet there can be no question that there were two such visits as

[8] Mark vi. 6.

are described in this chapter and chapter i. p. 11[9]. And the resemblances are not really greater than the differences, when they are closely examined, and the nature of the two occasions are distinctly borne in mind.

There is nothing surprising in the fact that Jesus should have gone a second time to Nazareth, or that He should have on this occasion marvelled at the unbelief of the people, even after their previous conduct towards Him. It was precisely in accordance with His merciful character to make a second offer of salvation even to such people as the Nazarenes had shown themselves to be; and He was only doing in this way what He had done in Jerusalem and Capernaum, in both of which places His life had been more than once in danger, although no actual attempt had been made upon it in them. And if He went thither to repeat His offer of Grace, He would, as He did every where, select the Synagogue and the Sabbath-day as the most fitting time and place for the public exposition of His doctrines. Neither is it to be wondered at that He marvelled at their unbelief. He had now been for more than fourteen months traversing the whole country, not merely preaching, but in every town and village accompanying His words with evidences of Divine power exerted over the sick, the lame, the blind, the dumb, over the very demons who distorted the bodies and souls of men, and lastly, over the powers of the Grave and Death. And yet the Nazarenes would not receive Him with all these proofs and testimonies to the truth of His Messiahship and Divinity. Could He, in the verity of His thorough humanity, do otherwise than marvel at this conduct?

There is one still further reason which has been assigned for this particular visit—a reason full of beauty and truth, founded upon a faithful conception of the human affections of Jesus. It

[9] The two visits are described respectively in Luke iv. 16, &c., and Matt. xiii. 54.

was not many days before, that His mother and brethren had gone over from Nazareth to Capernaum, alarmed at His incessant labours, and at what appeared to them a religious enthusiasm bordering upon mental derangement, and had sought to gain access to Him in order to place Him, for the sake of His health both bodily and mental, under some gentle home restraint. He had then declared that the claims of public duty transcended even those of private affection, and had refused to comply with the ill-judged though affectionate request of His relations. "Not merely (therefore) a desire to benefit the people of Nazareth generally, might be an inducement to make the second visit, but a special regard to the feelings of His mother and relatives, repulsed as they had seemed to be a day or two before, when they appeared as the instruments of Pharisaic malice at Capernaum. I know no incident in the whole Gospel story which exhibits our Blessed Lord's forbearing, considerate, and affectionate character more powerfully than the *early* opportunity which He took to show His mother, and brethren, and townspeople that the apprehensions and suspicions which they had been led to entertain respecting His mental condition were utterly groundless, and that He had the strongest claim to their confidence and attachment[1]."

The Nazarenes alluded to His *brethren and sisters* as being *with them.* This language exactly suits the circumstances of the case. The family had gone over to Capernaum in consequence of the evil rumours which had been so industriously circulated by the Pharisees regarding the source of His wonderful powers. The people were consequently led to associate the supernatural powers of Jesus with His humble origin, and to contrast His pretensions with the somewhat lowly position occupied by His relatives among themselves, to whom their attention was thus attracted. Believing in the Pharisaic reports

[1] Forshall, Preface to Gospel of S. Mark, p. xxxvi.

regarding the source of His powers, and thus remembering His apparent origin and birth, it may well be understood that, while the Nazarenes held aloof from Him, and treated Him with coldness and disrespect, there was not a man amongst them who would dare to lay a finger now upon His Person.

Jesus now quitted the place for ever; and, accompanied by the Twelve, set out upon a partial circuit of Galilee.

NOTE A. ON THE BRETHREN OF JESUS.

Regarding the "Brethren[1] of Jesus," two opinions only are entitled to consideration—the one that they were His actual uterine brothers, the other that they were simply His first cousins. In the face of the word ἀδελφοί, it is certainly necessary to offer satisfactory reasons for thinking that the latter is the correct supposition. The belief, indeed, in the ἀειπαρθενία, though a very natural and pious one, and entertained by a *consensus* of the Old Fathers, does not seem warranted by the actual language of Scripture. The contrary, in fact, seems the only natural inference both from the Angel's words to Joseph (Matt. i. 20), from the language used by the Virgin herself regarding Him (Luke ii. 48), and even from the ἕως οὗ of the Evangelist. Still it is improbable that the Holy Womb which bore the Πρωτότοκος should ever again have been opened by one born after the manner of men[2].

In the lists of the Apostles we find mention made of a second James, a second Judas (Lebbæus or Thaddæus [3]), and a second Simon, *the Kananite*, which three names are coincident with three of the four "brothers" of Jesus mentioned in Mark vi. 3. Now there are no satisfactory grounds for identi-

[1] On the wide signification of *brethren* amongst Orientals, like the Jews, see Deut. xxxiii. 9.

[2] It seems also certain that the direct royal line through the elder branch must have expired with Him who was the Everlasting Prince that should succeed to the throne of David.

[3] See p. 280.

fying Simon the Zealot (or Kananite) with the Simon of this passage; and it would seem strange that of four brothers *three* should become Apostles and the fourth only remain outside the twelve during the life-time of Jesus Himself. Moreover, when it is said that His mother and His *brethren* stood without, desiring to see Him, we cannot think that any of those who were actually Apostles were included in this number; they clearly belonged to that portion who did not yet believe in Him.

Now that "*James, the Lord's brother*," mentioned by S. Paul (Gal. i. 19) is the same with James the Less, or James the son of Alphæus, seems established by Mr. Meyrick in his article on James in Smith's Dict. of the Bible. If this be so, then we know that Jude or Judas was his brother (Jude i. 1), and also Joses (Matt. xxvii. 56). It is impossible, therefore, to doubt that these three are identical with the James, Joses, and Judas of the four specified in Mark vi. 3. If James and Jude were Apostles, there would thus be left Joses and Simon with the three[4] sisters who would be living apart from Jesus with their family; and these two names would amply justify the assertion that "neither did His brethren believe on Him, seeing that the expression is certainly not exhaustive of the whole four.

Now Alphæus, or Clopas[5], was, according to S. John xix. 24, the husband of *Mary*, the sister of Mary the Virgin. So at least both names are rendered in the A. V.; but these are not the same name, according to the original spelling in the Greek. The name of the Virgin is invariably written by the Evangelists in nom. dat. acc. and voc. Μαριάμ, gen. Μαρίας. The names of

[4] Matthew (xiii. 56) says πᾶσαι; there were, therefore, at least *three*.

[5] *Clopas* is the form written by S. John, not *Cleophas*, which (or rather Cleopas, see Luke xxiv. 18) is a different name altogether, being derived from the Greek: this is, in fact, a contraction from Cleopatros, as Antipas from Antipater, Silas from Silanus, Lucas from Lucanus, &c. Clopas is a Hebrew name, and is only another form of Alphæus; similarly Clovis is the same as Aloysius. (See Alford on the word in Smith's Dict. of the Bible.)

all the other Maries, without exception, are written **Μαρία**, gen. **Μαρίας**, dat. **Μαρίᾳ**, acc. **Μαρίαν**. They should be rendered in English respectively by *Miriam* and Mary.

Upon the whole, the probable inference from the statements in the New Testament is that James, Joses, Simon, and Judas, with at least three sisters[6], were all the offspring of the marriage of Mary, the sister of the Virgin, with Alphæus or Clopas, who dying before his wife, the family were received into the house, and the children adopted by Joseph his brother. The families being thus united, the four cousins would become, *in the eye of the Jewish Law*, the ἀδελφοὶ of Jesus.

If the cousins were, as is probable, all older than Jesus Himself, this would be a reason why Joses and Simon would seek to enforce a fraternal authority over Him in dissuading Him, or even trying to restrain Him, from the kind of life which He was then leading.

NOTE B.

ON S. MATT. viii. 19—22 COMPARED WITH S. LUKE ix. 57—62.

There are few passages in all the Gospels which prove more decisively than this the necessity of the very closest and most diligent examination of the particulars they record. Nothing is more calculated to mislead a casual reader, undisciplined in the indispensable mental preparation, than the recurrence of similar events or transactions, or the repetition of very similar language, in the different Gospels. Similarity, however close,

[6] Matt. (xiii. 56) says **πᾶσαι**, which implies more than two, at least.

does not constitute sameness or identity, and passages which appear at first sight almost exactly the same, and connected with the same period of history, will be frequently found, upon careful scrutiny, to present features perfectly irreconcilable with such a supposition. It is impossible to state the case in reference to such seemingly parallel and harmonized accounts, which, nevertheless, are probably entirely distinct and unconnected with each other, better than has been done by Mr. Forshall in an elaborate note upon this passage of S. Matthew. The entire remarks are too long for insertion here, but the following extracts should be read with earnest attention :—

"Dean Alford insists, as many others have done before him, that this is the same incident which is recorded by S. Luke, ch. ix. 57, and that it is quite impossible in any common fairness of interpretation to imagine otherwise. Notwithstanding this confident assertion, the student may rest tranquil in the belief that the accounts of S. Matthew and S. Luke refer to two different transactions. . . . . The incidents in S. Matthew are stated quite unequivocally to have occurred as our Lord was about to cross the Sea of Galilee. The incidents in S. Luke are stated not less unequivocally to have occurred while our Lord and His disciples were in the road, travelling apparently in Samaria or in Galilee. The two incidents to which S. Matt. refers occurred just as our Lord was leaving the coast of Capernaum, and both nearly at the same moment, upon that most memorable day when the conflict between Himself and His Galilean persecutors was at its height. The three incidents to which S. Luke refers occurred not, it is probable, at any one time, but while our Lord was on His way into Galilee, and collecting disciples with a view to the mission of the Seventy, and to His journey as Messiah to Jerusalem, and His Passion. In S. Matthew we have two who apply to our Lord, in S. Luke three: in S. Matt. one is a scribe; the other, we should infer, an apostle. . . . . But exact as is the correspondence of the two Evangelists in the request of the first applicant and in the reply to him, it is not so in the second case. S. Matthew's applicant was a disciple, one, as we have seen reason to conclude, of the twelve Apostles. The application is brought out by our Lord's departure from Capernaum; it is spontaneous on the part of the disciple: '*Lord, permit me first to go away.*' In S. Luke the applicant was clearly not an apostle—not even a regular follower. He receives his call upon that occasion, and the call produces the application. But it is in the reply of our Lord that the main difference discovers itself. To the answer, as we find it in Matthew, added in Luke, '*but do thou go away, and announce the Kingdom of God.*'

. . . . But we observe that our Lord, in the reply to him, as in the reply to the previous applicant, puts prominently and emphatically forward *the kingdom of God.* The phrase is not found in the account of S. Matthew. There our Lord speaks only of *following Him.* The former phrase was exactly fitted to the occasion. The Kingdom of God was now at hand in a new and more solemn sense. He who was to administer its affairs was now about to assume publicly the sovereignty. . . . . Exactly in keeping with the respective occasions are the accounts of the two Evangelists. To confound them is not merely to make the sacred writers inconsistent ; it is also to lose, in the introductions to two of the most important passages of our blessed Lord's life, the valuable illustrations which these introductions afford to the main narrative, as well as to the peculiar objects of the writers who record them."—Forshall, First 12 cc. of S. Matt., pp. 72—74.

CHAPTER IV.

COMPRISING A PERIOD OF ABOUT FIVE MONTHS FROM THE DEPARTURE FROM NAZARETH, IN DECEMBER, A.D. 28, TO THE THIRD PASSOVER IN APRIL 16, A.D. 29.

ORDER OF EVENTS.

Mission of the Twelve—Second partial circuit of Galilee—Episode of the Death of John the Baptist—Return of the Twelve—Retirement of Jesus to the Eastern side of the Sea of Galilee—Miracle of the Feeding of the Five Thousand—Return to Bethsaida—Jesus walks on the Sea—The people return in quest of Him—Defection of many Disciples in consequence of Jesus' language. (Note on the Voyage in Matt. xiv. 22—39; Mark vi. 45—53; and John vi. 16—21.)

SYNOPTICAL ARRANGEMENT.

S. Matt.	S. Mark.	S. Luke.	S. John.
ix. 36—38	..	...	...
x. 1, 5—15	vi. 7—13	ix. 1— 6	...
xi. 1.	...	...	...
xiv. 1—12	14—29	7— 9	...
13—21	30—44	10—17	vi. 1—13
22—33	45—52	...	14—21
34—36	53—56	...	...
...	...	...	22—71

CAPERNAUM. BEGINNING OF FEBRUARY, A.D. 29.

The observations which Jesus made in the course of His late circuit of Galilee, (the *third general*, as it is called) im-

pressed Him so deeply with the forlorn state of spiritual destitution of the people, that, upon His return, He summoned His twelve disciples, and invested them with powers to go forth and minister to their necessities. "The harvest[1]," He told them, "was plenteous, but the labourers (were) few;" and He bade them pray to the Lord of the Harvest "that He would send forth labourers into His Harvest[2]."

The powers with which He gifted the Twelve, who are now properly styled "Apostles," i.e. *Divinely commissioned Missionaries*, were to cast out demons, and to cure all manner of disease and sickness. These were their credentials which were to stamp their preaching with the necessary evidence of authority; and their office was to proclaim the advent of the kingdom of Heaven, and to urge men to repentance. The area of their labours was to be strictly the platform of the *Jewish* people. They were not to enter into any of the cities of the Samaritans, on their route for the purpose of preaching, nor to diverge into any of the heathen districts. The time for the ingathering of these into the Christian fold had not yet come, and the state of the Jewish mind and spirit required at present all their energy and activity. They were strictly enjoined to make no elaborate provision for their journey, but to go as they were, depending for support upon the providence of God and the voluntary hospitality of the inhabitants of such towns as they should visit in the course of their mission. On their arrival in any town they were to inquire who were persons of repute among the inhabitants, and to take up their abode with them during their stay, first saluting the dwellers, and bestowing upon them the benediction of heaven. If they met any where with a churlish rejection arising out of unbelief, they were to shake

[1] The use of this term suggests a reference to S. John iv. 35, upon which see p. 221

[2] Matt. ix. 36—38.

the dust of their feet off on their departure, as a symbolical act of condemnation against the people. It would be more tolerable, He told them (when judgment should hereafter be passed), for Sodom and Gomorrha, than for towns which should obstinately resist the preaching of the Gospel, when supported by the evidence they should give of its divine origin.

It was about the beginning of February, when the Twelve departed on their several missions. They were divided into six parties of two each, for the purpose of mutual aid and comfort. And on their return they were to report themselves to their Master, no doubt at a stated time and in some appointed place. Neither of these is mentioned by the Evangelists; but the time occupied may be set down at about two months; and the place of rendezvous may with tolerable certainty be assumed to have been Capernaum, the only place where He had a home, whenever He had one at all.

The six parties may probably be arranged as follow, according to S. Matt. x. 2—4.

1. Simon and Andrew.
2. James and John.
3. Philip and Bartholomew.
4. Thomas and Matthew Levi.
5. James (the son of Alphæus) and Lebbæus, surnamed Thaddeus (Judas, "the Lord's brother)."
6. Simon (Zelotes or Kananites) and Judas Iscariot.

It would of course be but natural to suppose that these several pairs were not associated together without good and sufficient reasons. And those reasons may be generally discerned without much difficulty. The first two pairs were, in each case, composed of *brothers*. Philip, as we learn from S. John i. 45, was the intimate friend of Nathanael (Bar-Tholmai); ·s and "Jude" (the fifth pair) were *brothers* (and the

adopted brethren of Jesus)[3]. Regarding the remaining two pairs (4 and 6) we do not know enough of their early history to discover exactly the principle of their selection. But, very possibly, Simon the Zealot, presumably from his name a man of energetic character, was assigned to Judas Iscariot, as one likely to restrain the (perhaps already manifested) tendency on his part to greed, which seems to be hinted at in S. Matt. x. 8. The remaining two, Thomas and Matthew, of necessity paired off.

As soon as the Twelve had departed with their instructions, Jesus Himself set forth again upon His second partial circuit of Galilee. It may seem somewhat strange at first that He should so soon have undertaken so laborious a journey again, when He could scarcely as yet have taken sufficient rest after the fatigues of a similar circuit. But, in point of fact, this second journey was the consequence of the former; for it arose out of His observation of the destitute spiritual condition of the people[4] (to which reference has already been made), and the compassion with which His personal survey of their state had filled Him. There was also, very probably another motive for quitting Capernaum at this moment, which was the growing hostility of the Pharisees of that place.

It may be assumed that this renewed circuit occupied Jesus for a period of about six weeks, at the conclusion of which He returned to what had for some considerable time now become His head-quarters, Capernaum. He arrived there apparently a few days[5] before the return of the various parties of the Apostles from their six different routes.

It was manifestly impossible that so striking a circumstance as this novel mission of six companies of men preaching in the

[3] See note on the brethren of Jesus, pp. 329—331. [4] Matt. ix. 36—38.

[5] For there had been time for the news of the murder of John, as well as of Herod's desire to see Himself, to have been brought to Him.

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nts of Jesus, and led to a marked epoch in the history of 's ministerial life.

The narrative of the circumstances connected with the ptist's death require also especial consideration here, because question of time of some importance is involved in the day his actual death.

EPISODE OF THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

From the account of the Jewish historian Josephus (the uthority for this connecting portion of the history), Antipas vas on his way to Rome on some business of his own, when he stayed for some days in the house of his half-brother Philip —*not* the Tetrarch of that name, but another son of Herod the Great by the second Mariamne. What the object or purpose of this journey was we are not informed; but from the casual way in which the success of his mission is alluded to by the historian[7], it would appear to have been of a private nature, wholly unaccompanied by any thing of a political character. There are, in fact, but three such circumstances with which we are acquainted which could have determined Antipas to take this journey[8]; and the period of it will of course depend in great measure upon whichever may be adopted as the correct one. (1.) He may have desired to obtain the consent of the Emperor Tiberius to dedicate to him the town of Tiberias, which he had built in his honour[9]. (2.) He may have desired to offer his condolences with the Emperor upon the DEATH of

[7] Διαπραξάμενος ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ἐφ' ἅπερ ἔσταλτο. Antt. xviii. 5. 1.

[8] It is erroneously assumed in Smith's Dict. of Greek and Roman Biography that this visit to Rome was on the occasion of his soliciting Augustus to confer upon him the royal dignity, after the death of his father Herod the Great.

[9] The date of the building is uncertain, being dependent upon the meaning of οἰκοδομεῖται, Jos. Antt. xviii. 2, 3.

the Empress Livia, his own friend and patroness. (3.) He may have desired PERMISSION to dedicate to him the city of Tiberias, which he had begun to build in A.D. 27[1].

The first of these opinions is maintained by Greswell, who, assuming that because Cæsarea[2] occupied ten years in building, therefore Tiberias would occupy about the same time, fixes the period of this journey in the spring of A.D. 27, and of his return in the spring of A.D. 28[3]. The second is argued for with much force by Wieseler (p. 220), and adopted by Lewin (p. 177); but the date would bring us down to far too late a period of time, for, as Livia died in the beginning of A.D. 29, it must have required at least from nine to twelve months for Antipas to have received the intelligence of her death and to make both the outward and homeward voyage. We should then arrive almost at the period of the Crucifixion; and there is certainly a period of twelve months yet to account for after the execution of the Baptist. If the third supposition be admitted it would quite accord with the necessary chronology, but there is one objection which lies against all three, and that is the statement of Josephus that the business, whatever it was, lay in *Rome*. Lewin (p. 177) evades the difficulty by saying that Rome here must stand for *Italy*, for at that time Tiberius was at Capreæ in Campania, having quitted Rome, never to return, in A.D. 26. It is, therefore, better to suppose that Josephus, with his sources of information, was correct in speaking of Rome, and to infer, as above suggested, that the business was of a purely private nature. Whatever it was, it must have been concluded in time for him to have reached his favourite southern metropolis by the early

[1] See Lewin, F. S., p. 173.

[2] I.e. *Maritima*, built by Herod the Great in honour of his patron the Emperor Augustus.

[3] Greswell reckons by the years of Tiberius' reign. If, therefore, the argument above (pp 203—207) be well founded, his chronology here must put back one year.

part of A.D. 29. He therefore probably left his dominions and proceeded on his journey to Rome somewhere in the summer of A.D. 27.

During this visit to Philip, Antipas fell in love with his wife Herodias, and his guilty passion being returned, it was arranged between them that, on his return from his journey, Herodias should quit her husband and become the wife of Antipas. The regular ceremony of betrothal was accordingly gone through between them, but not with such secrecy but that his own lawful wife received intimation of the fact at a very early date. Dissembling her knowledge and intentions, she prevailed upon her husband to send her under an escort to his border fortress of Machærus, where the commandant of the garrison received her, and conveyed her in safety into the dominions of her own father Aretas, King of Arabia Petræa. The difficulty which here meets the chronological inquirer is well known. Josephus, the authority for this portion of the history, appears to say that Machærus was "at this time tributary" to Antipas' wife's father, Aretas. And it would rather seem as though this might have been the reason which determined her to make for that stronghold. But Josephus's statement on this point is utterly inexplicable. Machærus had all along been in the possession of the Herodian family; and, as a frontier fortress, was of the first importance to Herod Antipas himself. There is no hint in history of its ever having passed out of his power up to this time, nor as yet had there been any quarrel between him and his father-in-law; for his proceeding regarding Herodias had hitherto been kept secret from the world; and, although they had by some means reached the ears of his lawful wife, she had carefully concealed her knowledge, and in fact dissembled so well, that it was by Herod's *own consent*, and under an escort of his troops, that she was conveyed to Machærus.

Under all the circumstances of the case, and considering the utter impossibility of reconciling the statement of Josephus (as it stands) with all known facts, I do not hesitate to adopt the highly ingenious conjecture of Lewin regarding the text of the passage in question[4]. The language of the historian will then be that the daughter of Aretas persuaded her husband Herod to send her "to Machærus, *and* the parts (of the country which were) tributary to her father." This was what, having no suspicion whatever of her ulterior object, Antipas under the present circumstances would be but too well pleased to do, since he could then prosecute his designs with regard to Herodias, freed from the unpleasant scrutiny of a jealous wife.

The rumour, however, of the intended gross infraction of the Mosaic Law reached other ears besides those of the daughter of Aretas. John was at this time preaching and baptizing in Ænon (p. 172 sqq.), and on becoming acquainted with the circumstances at once sternly rebuked the Tetrarch for his conduct. This was the first and overt act which excited the anger of Antipas. Things were in a critical state, and he could not afford to have his conduct thus publicly arraigned by the great Prophet of the people. It would be necessary, therefore, to place some restraint upon the language of the bold speaker, especially as (according to our supposition) he would be absent for some time from his dominions.

This is the cause actually assigned by the first two Synoptists for the incarceration of the Baptist. Josephus (Antt. xviii. 5, 2), however, states another ground for the action of Antipas, viz.

[4] The original text runs thus (Antt. xviii. 5. 1): Προαπεστάλκει γὰρ ἐκ πλείονος εἰς τὸν Μαχαιροῦντα τότε πατρὶ αὐτῆς ὑποτελῆ. Lewin, p. 186, proposes simply to read τάτε, which overcomes all the difficulty in question. Independently of the external indications in favour of the change, it is to be highly recommended by critical propriety; for, if the former reading τότε be correct, ὄντα is certainly required with ὑποτελῆ.

his fears of the influence of John over the people, which might eventually endanger his own throne. There was, in fact, a complication of causes which led to this event, one of the most important in the Gospel history as determining the course of Jesus Himself. It appears from S. Matt. xvii. 12, and S. Mark ix. 13, that there were others besides Herod who were anxious to be rid of the Preacher of the Wilderness. And these were the Pharisees of Jerusalem, who, discovering their original mistake in assuming him to be the Messiah, were now eager to be rid of the man who publicly denounced them as a "generation of vipers." This is abundantly clear from the language of S. Matt. iv. 12, and S. Mark i. 14, where it appears that John was given over (παρεδόθη) to Herod, and this could only have resulted from the action of the Sanhedrim.

Herod, at first, would have put John to death, but for fear of exciting the vengeance of the people. He therefore kept him as a state-prisoner in his castle of Machærus; and in the course of frequent interviews conceived a deep respect and liking for his prisoner, and was greatly influenced in his public conduct by his advice and expostulations. (S. Mark vi. 20.)

Had it depended entirely upon Herod, it may well be conceived that after a time he would gladly have released his prisoner; but the fury of a revengeful woman had been excited, and John's days were numbered. It would seem from the narrative that, as Greswell (iii. 423) and Lewin (p. 186) think, Antipas was not yet *married*, but only *betrothed*[6], and that it was the fact that John stood between her and the accomplishment of her object, which so violently excited the hatred of Herodias. She resolved to remove the only obstacle to her sharing the crown of the Tetrarch, and bided her time for a suitable opportunity to execute her design.

[6] Γαμεῖν, as scholars well know, means both; see Joseph., B. J. I. 12. 3. 17. 8; xix. 5. 1.

LIVIAS (OR JULIAS), END OF MARCH, A.D. 29.

The desired opportunity was not long wanting. Herod, after the fashion of the times, was about to celebrate the anniversary of the day of his accession[6] with great pomp and splendour; for, weak and vain, he had surrounded himself with a luxurious court, in imitation of his Roman Imperial master. Shrewd and calculating in her vengeful hate, Herodias knew thoroughly the character of the man she had married, and laid her plans in accordance no doubt with some previous experience of his weakness.

It was while the festivity was at its height that Herodias, having previously instructed her as to the part she was to play, caused her own daughter Salome to enter the banqueting-hall in the character of *a dancing-girl*, to perform before the prince and his assembled nobles. It was an act fraught with disgrace to all the parties concerned in the transaction; for it was not only a violation of all feminine decorum thus to break through the retiring habits of Jewish or, indeed, Eastern maidens in general; but the character under which the girl appeared was one from which her own mother ought to have preserved her, instead of thus sacrificing a daughter's modesty to the gratification of her own revenge.

Carried away by excitement and delight, Antipas, forgetful that in the disgrace of his step-daughter his own was involved as that of her natural guardian and protector, in the heat of the hour unguardedly swore that, in token of his admiration, he would give her any thing she might choose to ask him, even were it to the extent of half his kingdom. This very expression serves to reveal the character of this weak and vainglorious prince; for it is impossible not to perceive that this grandiloquent promise was made in imitation of the celebrated oath

[6] See below, pp. 346, 347.

of Ahasuerus to Esther[7]—an oath made by a noble-minded monarch to a devoted woman, in whose discretion and devotion he had learned by experience that he might place implicit reliance.

Antipas discovered too late the nature of the stratagem in which he had become involved. The girl, tutored as she had been beforehand, repaired at once to her mother to ask what request she should prefer[8]. "The head of John the Baptist in a charger[9]," was the furious woman's reply. When the fatal truth was made known, the Tetrarch perceived how he had been entrapped, and was, there is every reason to believe, "exceedingly sorry" for his rash and culpable imprudence. But his natural weakness was conspicuously shown in the emergency. He did not at once indignantly repudiate such a claim as inconsistent with the moral conditions which are inseparable, even if not expressed in terms, from an oath made in anticipation of a request. An oath made under such circumstances can only hold good as touching *things lawful*, a condition which is implied in the very making of the oath[1]. As it was, it was made in a moment of rashness and folly, and was now to be redeemed by an act of greater weakness and wickedness still. Under a perverted notion of honour, and a reluctance to seem to disgrace the girl by a refusal, the Tetrarch despatched one of his own body-guards immediately to the prison where John lay in Machærus; and that night had not

[7] See Esther v. 6; vii. 2. Compare the little tetrarchy of Galilee with the empire of Ahasuerus!

[8] Some persons seem to find a difficulty in reconciling S. Matt. xiv. 8 with S. Mark vi. 24. Surely the προβιβάσθεισα of the former merely means that Salome consulted her mother first upon such a subject. Herodias would hardly have imparted to so young a girl her real object *before* the end had been attained.

[9] *For what purpose*, we may perhaps imagine from the conduct of Fulvia regarding the head of Cicero.

[1] See Bp. Sanderson, "De juramenti obligatione," Prælect. iii. 16.

passed before the tongue which had exasperated the guilty paramour of Herod was silenced for evermore.

The fact that Herod sent at once to *Machærus*, and that John's execution took place that same night, proves that the banquet was held at a spot in the near neighbourhood of that fortress. There is little doubt that the scene lay at the town of Julias or Livias above-mentioned, the favourite summer residence of Herod. That the time was towards the close of March is to be inferred from the connexion in which the account of the death of John stands with reference to the other parts of the general narrative. For it seems to have taken place just about the time of the return of Jesus from the circuit mentioned above, and previously to that of the Twelve from their mission. Furthermore, the murder was just fresh upon the conscience of Herod, as would appear from his alarm on hearing of the fame of Jesus. Superstitious, like most weak and guilty men, he feared that in Jesus the murdered Baptist lived again; and it was this uneasiness, and his anxiety to see Jesus, which in great measure determined the change of movement on His part above alluded to[2]. With this conclusion also agrees the supposition that by the γενέσια which he celebrated, is meant, not the anniversary of the day of his birth[3], but that of his accession to the Tetrarchy of Galilee. And this he would most probably date from the same time as that in which his brother Archelaus was considered King of Judæa by the people, although his title was

[2] Pp. 338, 339.

[3] It is more probable that this is the meaning of γενέσια, not only because the celebration of birthdays was odious to the Jews, but also because of the magnificence of the entertainment, for the day of Accession was a very favourite anniversary with monarchs. But, independently of other reasons, had the day been the birthday, the Evangelist would most naturally have used the word γενέθλια, which was the more distinctive of the two. The Evangelists, it must be always remembered, wrote the Greek of educated men. For the full argument, see Wieseler, pp. 266—269; also Suicer's Thesaurus, i. 746, and Hesychius in v.

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desired them to come apart for a time into some quiet spot where they might be free from further importunity. They therefore embarked in the vessel which now always awaited His orders in this neighbourhood, and made for the opposite shore of the lake, where they landed in an uninhabited portion of the district belonging to a city called Bethsaida. This is unquestionably the city called by Herod Philip *Julias*, situate on the east bank of the Jordan, at a short distance above the northern limit of the lake. Here upon the grassy sward of the modern Butaiha, at the base of the rocky hill that closes in the south-eastern corner of the plain[5], the Master and His disciples disembarked on the morning of Thursday, April 5, A.D. 29[6].

Their departure, however, could not be effected with the privacy they desired. As soon as their intention was discovered, multitudes of people started for the purpose of overtaking them, and observing the course they took across the lake, made the circuit of the shore with the utmost expedition, and actually in many instances outstripped the vessel itself, and arrived first at the landing-place [7].

Fatigued as they all were, both Master and Apostles, Jesus would not overlook the claims made upon Him by such persistent importunity. He saw the multitude as sheep without a shepherd, left without real spiritual nutriment by their proper guides, and He at once addressed Himself to their twofold necessities, speaking to them of the Kingdom of God, and healing all those whose bodily infirmities laid claim to His compassion.

[5] See Thomson, "The Land and the Book," p. 372.

[6] See Greswell, i. 407, 408.

[7] The expression πέζῃ does not mean (according to A. V.) *on foot:* it notes the travelling by land as opposed to a voyage by sea. From this meaning Lange (ii. 60) imagines that ἐξελθών in S. Matt. rs to Jesus' coming out of the desert, when its plain meaning is barking." See Greswell, ii. 347.

Amid all these proceedings, the day began to wane; and, believing that in His earnestness and the occupied state of His mind, their Master had forgotten the desert character of the place, the disciples came to Him, and urged upon Him the desirableness of dismissing the multitude while there was yet daylight, that they might go into the neighbouring villages for the purpose of buying food. They must have been strangely perplexed under the circumstances, when Jesus simply replied, "They need not depart: give ye them to eat." He then looked round about upon the thousands who thronged the space below where He sat, and turning to Philip, the caterer of their little company, asked him "whence" (i.e. by what means, perhaps *by what outlay of money*) they could buy provisions for the people? It appears that the stock of money belonging to their little treasury amounted to just 200 Roman denars, about £6 10*s*. of our money. Some at once proposed to apply this to the purchase of food; but Philip, with practical good sense, remarked that it would not suffice to provide even a morsel apiece for so large a number of persons. Jesus then desired them to go and see what number of loaves they could muster among them; and Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, reported that they had found a lad who had with him five barley loaves and two small fishes; but, as he pertinently asked, "What were they among so many?"

The object of Jesus in asking these questions was, we can scarcely doubt, to convince the minds of the Twelve, in the first instance, of the hopeless inadequacy of their own means and available provisions for the supply of the wants of the great assemblage before them; and, secondly, by the systematic process He adopted, to call the attention of all to the great miracle He was about to work. He desired the Apostles to see that all the assemblage were seated, and He directed that they should be arranged in rows fifty together, with intervals between the

fifties, and still wider intervals between the hundreds. Jesus then took the loaves and fishes, and with a proleptic Eucharistic grace broke them, and distributed them to the disciples to set before the people. By the arrangement which He had commanded He ensured a regular and orderly distribution of His bounty, while He took precautions that the women and children should not be, as they might otherwise have been, overborne and excluded from their proper share. As the number of *men alone* is returned at 5000, it would seem, upon the ordinary calculation in such cases, that there could not have been much less than twelve thousand persons present, so that each apostle would have, roughly speaking, nearly a thousand persons to serve. The time which would be thus occupied cannot be set down at less than three hours; and if the distribution began, as it seems from the observation which the disciples addressed to Jesus, at a little after three, the repast could not have been concluded before six o'clock in the evening.

The day assigned above (p. 348), may safely be assumed to be the true day upon which this great miracle was wrought. It was, as S. John tells us, just before the Passover, which fell on April 16; and this is borne out also by the statements of the first two Synoptists, as well as his own, regarding the fact that there was *much green grass* in the place. The plain of Butaiha is exceedingly rich in verdure; but, as in all Palestine, it is extremely short-lived, for as soon as the summer drought sets in, the grass becomes scorched, and withers up. The date of the transaction therefore becomes thus approximately fixed, for after April there would have been little grass left green in Palestine.

The repast being concluded, Jesus gave the disciples a warning against waste, by desiring the fragments to be gathered up, that nothing might be lost. The result was that twelve

baskets of the kind called "cophini," were filled with the remnants. These were not very dissimilar in form from the Welsh *coracles*, which they equalled in size and resembled in the mode of carriage. This basket was the regular accompaniment of the travelling Jew, serving him, with a bundle of hay which it contained, at once as a basket for his wares or provisions, and for his bed[8]. What then must the multiplication of the loaves and fishes have been!

During the progress of the meal, the people became more and more amazed at the great power which thus miraculously supplied them with food; and a very general belief was expressed that He who did this thing must be of a truth "*that Prophet* that should come into the world." They were evidently thinking of the passage Deut. xviii. 18, and coupling their own present repast at the hands of Jesus with the feeding of their fathers by Moses with the manna in the wilderness. The excitement at last rose to such a pitch that the proposal was carried to make Jesus King; and they resolved that if He showed any reluctance or hesitation, they would use force to compel Him[9]. In this general desire even the Twelve Disciples evidently shared, and it became necessary to take decisive steps to put a stop to the proceedings of the people. Jesus, therefore, desired the disciples to return to the vessel, and cross over before Him to Bethsaida[1], while He Himself remained behind to dismiss the multitudes. He was obliged, however, to exert His authority in order to *compel* them to leave Him (ἠνάγκασεν); for, whether out of desire to persuade Him to comply with the

[8] So Juvenal,

"Judæis, quorum *cophinus fœnumque* supellex."—S. iii. 14.

———— "*cophino fœnoque* relicto."—S. vi. 542.

See Lange, ii. 61.

[9] They probably connected with Deut. such passages as Ps. ii. Ps. cxlix., Isa. ix. 6, Zech. ix. 9, &c.

[1] For this voyage, see the Note at the end of the chapter.

and apparently making for the
themselves were bound. There
d to the *appearance*, which was
But such was the belief of the
t great miracle, which ought to
n for this great infringement of
ut that it must be a *spirit* which
and Master Jesus. He was at
nd, as at Emmaus was making
would have gone before them, no
to abide the test; and seeing their
Be of good cheer! it is I; be not

ever the forward spokesman of the
if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee
answer of Jesus was, "Come." Peter
the side of the vessel, and walked to meet
affording him at first a firm substratum
the night was boisterous, and as the wind
spray dashed up into his face, Peter's courage
failed him, and as it failed, so also his power,
was only by faith, declined. He began to sink,
extremity of his terror he cried, "Lord, save me!"
mediately stretched out His hand, and seizing His
ollower, restored his footing upon the unstable
ing, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou

s time the disciples with the remainder of the crew
assured of the identity of the Person whose appearance
used them so much alarm. Gladly they welcomed their
vessel; and the crew came and worship-
ging that He was the Son of God.[a]

[a] Matt. xiv. 28.

way; and in no instance was this faith disappointed. S. Mark here adds parenthetically (vi. 56) that this was the custom wherever He went. From all quarters in the neighbourhood the people would crowd to Him for the relief which He never failed to afford. These facts throw a terrible light upon the state of disease and misery that existed among these unfortunate people at this time. Leprosy, ophthalmia, paralysis, epilepsy, insanity—all the disorders to which Eastern people are especially liable, added to that most dreadful of all inflictions, demoniacal possession,—all these seem to have existed in fullest intensity at the time of the appearance of Jesus upon the scene of the world's affliction. And so the prophets had described it[5] 700 years before He came to substantiate the truth of their divine declarations.

During the previous evening, while Jesus and His disciples were occupied with ministering to the wants of the people, several fishing-boats, taking advantage of the wind which blew from that quarter, had arrived from Tiberias at the landing-place of Bethsaida Gaulanitis. When the morning dawned, the people who had remained behind during the night in the neighbourhood came in quest of Jesus, who they knew had not left by the boat which took His disciples across. Failing to find him anywhere, they took advantage of these vessels, and rightly guessing His ultimate destination, made for Capernaum, which was well known to be His head-quarters; and the following day (being the Sabbath day) repaired to the Synagogue, where they found Him according to their expectations.

It is probable from the internal evidence of the account, that this body of persons constituted the leading party which desired to make Jesus King, in consequence of the miracle from which they had derived such substantial benefits. And it seems equally clear from the whole tenor of the story that their object

[5] See Isa. xxxv. 5, 6; lxi. 1.

in so desiring was one of purely *worldly interest*—that they fancied they saw in Him one who could bring about a more prosperous condition of things than they were then able of themselves to command.

SYNAGOGUE OF CAPERNAUM. APRIL 7.

The first question of these persons on discovering Jesus, was, "Rabbi! how (i. e. by what possible means) camest Thou hither?" They could not divine *how* He had managed to arrive before themselves. He had not taken ship, nor had He gone round by the northern route along the coast. He had had some means therefore of His own, by which He had come; and they were additionally anxious to know how far His power really extended. Jesus did not solve their difficulty. It was only for those who believed upon Him in His real character that it was reserved to know of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. He addressed Himself at once to the state of their minds, seeking to raise them from the low level of worldly desires up to the comprehension of spiritual truths. He told them that their object in seeking Him was not that their hearts had been touched and their understandings convinced by the consideration of His miracles, but solely from the desire to benefit further in their appetites by the exercise of His bounty. He desires them therefore to labour not for perishable food, but for that which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give them, for upon Him the Father has set the seal of His power and Godhead.

The mention of this food seems to have acted upon the minds of these Galilæans, much as that of the living water did upon the mind of the Samaritan woman. They wanted to know what they must do in order to work the works of God, and so have a claim to its acquisition. Jesus told them in reply, that the true work which God required of them was Faith in Him whom

God had sent, plainly alluding to Himself as the Messiah of Israel.

The people whom He addressed were not slow to comprehend both the requirement which was thus made upon their sincerity, and the sacrifices which it involved. They retorted, therefore, that before they would consent to admit such a claim, they must be better satisfied regarding the character and authority of Him who made it. "*What sign* showest Thou, then, that we may see and believe Thee? *what dost Thou work*[6]?" They reminded Him of the manna which had fed their fathers in the wilderness, and which had come down from Heaven at Moses' promise for the purpose, intimating that the feeding of five thousand men one evening with common bread could bear no comparison with such a miracle as that. He must do something greater yet. Their fathers were dead. How could *His* bread confer life?

It is strange that this particular objection should have been made by these men. And it is quite clear that few in Israel ever comprehended the real nature of any of Jesus' miracles. Had they done so, they would not have hesitated as to the comparative moment and magnitude of the two. They did not see that, whereas God sent them the manna in a way of which they knew nothing (for they found it upon the ground when they rose up in the morning[7]), the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes had been wrought *in their own presence*, before their own eyes, by the Person with whom they were speaking, and out of whose hands the loaves proceeded in that incomprehensible manner. That which Jesus wrought was a *sign*, and the sign was that Jehovah Emmanuel was among His people.

Jesus, in reply, reminds those who had ventured to take

[6] John vi. 30, 31. [7] Exod. xvi. 21. Ps. lxxviii. 24.

Him to task—(1.) That it was *not Moses*, as they intimated, who sent them that bread from Heaven, but THE FATHER. (2.) That that bread was merely a *natural organization*, although its mode of production might be miraculous. (3.) That the same Father was even at that moment giving them the *true Bread* from Heaven, which was "He which cometh down from Heaven, and giveth life unto the world[8]."

As has been before remarked, the term *true* is always applied by Jesus and the Evangelists to that which is in the *highest form true* (ἀληθινος) in opposition to that which is only subordinately so. Here it stands for that which alone is permanently true (that μόνιμόν τι of Aristotle) which stands in opposition to the uncertain and fading objects of Creation.

The Jews fell into the same mistake regarding the living Bread from Heaven, as Nicodemus and the woman of Samaria had formerly done, of understanding the words of Jesus in a *literal sense*. *What* was the bread which He spoke of they did not know; but they perceived that He was speaking of something very wonderful and excellent; and perhaps they thought it endued with something of the marvellous powers of the *Tree of Life*, that a man eating of it need never hunger again. That they connected it with the notion of *something divine* is clear; and it seems from their address to Jesus in preferring their request, that they believed He *had* some prophetic power which would enable Him to procure it for them. For they address him as LORD, a term which in the language of Inspiration would mean JEHOVAH. Not indeed that they had any such belief, but they certainly used the word in a sense of great respect. Moreover, there must have been a certain latent feeling of better things in their minds, some indistinct connecting of the *material* bread with *spiritual* benefit, for Jesus to have continued the conversa-

[8] John vi. 33.

tion in the same spiritual strain. For He did not "cast pearls before swine," nor add to the condemnation of men by pressing upon them truths which they were *determined not to accept.* He proceeds in the same way in which He had before drawn out the deeper spiritual desires and perceptions of the Samaritan woman, by now declaring *Himself* to be the true Bread of Life, which alone can satisfy the hungry soul with goodness, while belief in Him *as He is* will prevent all thirst; for He is the true Rock from which flow the waters of life.

There was nothing, it must be observed, in all this figurative language which was beyond the reach of those whom Jesus was now addressing. The blessings of the spiritual kingdom had been uniformly described in prophetical language by the symbols of *the food of life;* and Isaiah especially declares of the advent of the Messiah, that in His days the people "*shall not hunger nor thirst*[9]." This fact, together with the tacit reference to the *Rock* from which the water was miraculously brought in the wilderness (which would necessarily be in the mind of a Jew coupled with the recollection of the manna) explains why with the *bread* which satisfies the hungry soul Jesus couples the quenching also of *thirst.* Still He adds (in reference to something which had already passed, but which S. John has not recorded) that He had already told them that they did not believe, although they had His Presence before their eyes.

Now there is only one way in which this statement can be understood. These men *did* believe in Jesus; they did believe Him to be the Messias; and they proved their belief by the expressed intention of even using force to compel Him to be their King. But precisely because they *did* believe Him to be the Messias, they did *not* believe Him to be the SON OF GOD. No Jew, except perhaps S. Peter, ever spontaneously rose to that

[9] Isa. xlix. 10.

belief in Jesus before the Resurrection. The popular view of the Messiah was not connected with any notion of *Divinity*, otherwise they would not have entertained the idea, which even the Sanhedrim at one time held, that John the Baptist might be He. And it was precisely because Jesus *did* claim that origin and designation that they gave Him over to death. To this declaration is then added (says Hengstenberg[1]), "a further declaration concerning that which Christ vouchsafes to His followers, which is forfeited by unbelief, in which is also included an urgent invitation to renounce unbelief." He tells the Jews present, that it is the will of that Father in whom they professed to believe themselves, that all who, *having seen*[2] the Son, are willing to believe in Him, shall receive final salvation, and be raised to everlasting life at the day of Judgment; that not one of those shall be lost; for that it is the will of the Father that the Son shall preserve the souls of all that will receive Him, and that the Son Himself shall raise them up by virtue of His own Almighty power. And in doing as He was doing, Jesus declares that He was not acting simply in His human nature, but in full accord with the Father who had sent Him for the Salvation of men.

That the Jews, who had already been willing and desirous to accept Jesus as their Messiah, and even to place Him upon the Throne, had no idea in their minds of associating the Godhead of Jehovah with the advent of the Christ, is evidenced by the angry comments which were made amongst them when He spoke of Himself as the bread which came down from Heaven. They immediately recalled the fact that He was the Son (as all believed) of Joseph, whose father and mother they knew—that is, whose names were to be found in the genealogical registers.

[1] On S. John, i. 334.

[2] ὁ θεωρῶν, Heb. חָזָה (chazah); θεωρῶ is used by the LXX in the sense of *understanding*.

What could be His meaning therefore in speaking of "coming down from heaven?"

Perceiving the confusion, and the offence which these men took at His words, Jesus points out to them the true secret of their unwillingness to receive Him. The Father, in whom they professed to believe, had not wrought in their hearts to draw them to Him. There must be the *disposition* to see Him as He is, before the Father will work in the hearts of men. The will must be present before the grace can work. This at least is comprehensible even in the mysterious and hidden workings of Divine power. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which sent Me draw Him; and *I* will raise him up at the last day." He reminds the Jews that their own prophets had borne testimony to this truth, when they spoke under the Divine influence such words as these: "They shall be all taught of God[8]." It could be therefore only under the guidance of the Father that men could be brought to believe on Him. But as this statement might seem to involve two false conclusions, either the inferiority of the Son to the Father, or the independence of man of the mediation of the Son, Jesus proceeds to impress upon their minds the truth that there is only One who has seen the Father, and that is He which is of God. He thus intimates that the drawing of men to the Son is the joint and harmonious work of both.

These latter observations of Jesus may be regarded as plain statements of Divine truth which were called forth by the murmuring of the Jews at the figurative expression of the "bread that came down from heaven" He now recurs to the previous image. First, asserting that he who would attain to everlasting life must previously have belief in Him, He again declares that He is "*The* Bread of Life;" and He contrasts the

[8] See Isa. liv. 13.

perishable nature of the effects of the manna, as shown by the death of all those who were fed by it, with that immortality which is conferred by feeding upon Him.

There is a fresh idea now presented to the minds of the hearers in the declaration which follows, that the bread which Jesus will give is His *flesh*, on behalf of the world, that the world may live and not die. Of course the same condition of mind which rendered the Jews averse from any idea of the connexion between Jesus and Jehovah, prevented them from entering into the full comprehension of the spiritual meaning involved in these words. Still there was by no means an unanimity of opinion amongst them upon the subject. Some were apparently disposed to condemn Him at once for the statement of an impossibility, while others seem to have desired rather to wait some clear and decisive explanation of His real meaning. That they did not, any of them, understand His words in a literal sense may be inferred from the nature of the case. The difficulty seems to have been rather *how far* to admit the spiritual claim contained in the statement. To persons familiar, like the Jews, with the figurative expressions of the Old Testament, there could be little difficulty in understanding a spiritual allusion; and they doubtless did correctly interpret the language of Jesus into an assertion of His own Theophany, which they were required to receive, and the necessity of an incorporation with His Theanthropy by faith. The *dispute* amongst the Jews, therefore (manifestly implying that there were *some* who began to side with Him), was not as to the *form*, but as to the *matter* of His language; not *how* the thing was to be done, but how Jesus could have the power or right, *as man*, to make such a statement regarding Himself. And this is clear from the following words, in which Jesus (according to His custom when His divine statements were called in question, or made the subject of debate), reiterates His statement in stronger and unmis-

takable terms, prefacing His declaration with His most solemn formula of emphatic assertion. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." The words are a distinct and emphatic corroboration of what He had previously stated with regard to the spiritual incorporation of Himself by faith in the hearts of men[4].

Jesus concludes this sublime discourse by likening the union which takes place spiritually between the true believer and

[4] It is not to be supposed that Jesus is here *anticipating* the institution of the Lord's Supper. That would have been necessarily unintelligible to all whom He was addressing, even to the Twelve Apostles themselves. His primary meaning must certainly have respect to the carrying out of the leading idea, based upon the phraseology of the Old Testament, of the spiritual incorporation of Himself in the hearts of men by that faith which should see in Him the Revelation of Jehovah, the only Source and Author of Life to the Universe.

Still it is quite impossible to overlook the fact that there is a kind of proleptic allusion to the nature of the Second Sacrament. It is observable that *S. John* does not record the institution of either Baptism or the Eucharist as such. But it cannot be supposed (without doing violence to the wisdom of this Evangelist) that the striking language of Jesus (which he alone has preserved) can have been intended otherwise than as allusive to what was yet to come to pass. The other writers had spoken of the Sacraments *themselves;* and S. John (the purely supplementary character of whose Gospel is undeniable) evidently records these words as leading up to the facts, and pointing to the truths, subsequently to be enshrined in the symbolic institutions themselves. Neither is it to be lost sight of that the great miracle of the Food which had just been wrought, and which in fact led to this conversation, is expressly stated by S. John to have just preceded the *Jewish Passover itself*, to which this year, for prudential reasons, He did not go up. The opposite views which have been urged upon this debated point have been well brought into harmony by Hengstenberg. "When Jesus speaks of the eating of His flesh, and the drinking of His blood, He understands primarily by this, a relation which may at once be formed, the giving up of one's own natural life and being, and unconditional consecration to the Son of Man, so that His holy flesh and blood take the place of that which is natural and unholy, and His theanthropic personality penetrates and ennobles that of the ordinary man, so that he can say, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'" (i. 352, 353.)

Himself with that which subsists between Himself and the Father.

The occurrence which has just been related befell upon the Sabbath of April 5, A.D. 29, in the Synagogue of Capernaum, the *day after* the arrival upon the shore of Gennesareth. The result of Jesus' words was that many who from one motive or another, the desire of profit or the hope of worldly advancement, had begun of late to join the body of His followers, now, in disappointment and disgust, withdrew from the society of One whose words they were incompetent to understand, and whose true character they did not care to realize. Jesus made but one parting observation when He inwardly perceived the difficulty which had its origin in their worldly and unspiritual natures. He asked them, if they took offence at what He had now said, how would it be if they should witness the ascension of the Son of Man into that Heaven whence He had already told them He had come down? But He tells them that the reason why they rejected Him was that they were of carnal dispositions only, and that it is only they who (as He had said to Nicodemus) are *born of the Spirit* who can comprehend His meaning.

It was enough. The would-be disciples renounced their allegiance, and retired at once from the Divine Presence.

There was one final remark, however, which signalizes the tone of this discourse. "There are some of you," said Jesus, speaking in general terms, "who believe not." On this the Evangelist John remarks that Jesus knew *from the beginning* both who did not really believe in Him, and also who it was that should betray Him.

As the crowd dispersed, Jesus turned to the Twelve, and asked sadly, "Will ye also go away?" The answer was given in the noble words of Peter the spokesman, "Lord, to whom shall we go? *Thou* hast the words of eternal life, and we

believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God[5]." The reply of Jesus was, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a *devil*[6]?"

The words applied to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, and they were *spoken on the evening of Saturday, April* 7, A.D. 29.

On the morning of Friday, April 5, A.D. 30, Jesus, betrayed by Judas, died upon a Roman cross.

[5] This *witness* of course does not apply to the particular individuals whom He is addressing. The observation applies to all to whom the news of the Ascension should be affirmed by reliable testimony.

[6] *Suadente Diabolo*, see S. John xiii. 27.

NOTE ON THE VOYAGE IN PAGES 352—354.

So much difficulty has been made upon the subject of this voyage that it seems better, in order not to interrupt the thread of the narrative, to reserve its consideration for a note.

The chief difficulty seems to lie in the question whether there was more than one town of this name on the shores of the sea of Tiberias. Dr. Thomson contends that there was only one, Bethsaida *Julias*, near the mouth of the Jordan, on the north of the lake. The site of this town has been generally supposed to be marked by the ruins called Et Tel—about two miles north-east from the coast. The insignificance, however, of these ruins, and their distance from the lake, cause him to place the site lower down, close to the embouchure of the river, where there are more extensive ruins on both banks. Those on the west he considers to be the remains of the original town; these on the east he assigns to the Romanized city of Julias, as restored or built by Herod Philip. The other Bethsaida, now identified with some probability with Ain et Tabigah, he considers a perfectly unnecessary invention of Reland's, made in order to escape the difficulty of the narrative.

There is, however, mention made by Jerome of another Bethsaida, upon the western shore, near to Capernaum; and it is certainly scarcely possible to understand the narrative except upon that supposition[1]. For the disciples first sail to "a city

[1] The argument in favour of the Western Bethsaida will be found fully, and I think conclusively, stated in Smith's Dict. of the Bible *in voce.*

called Bethsaida" (Luke ix. 10) with Jesus, and leaving Him behind return *to Bethsaida* (Mark vi. 45.) Greswell, on the other hand (ii. 345, note), supposes yet a third town of the name on the south-east of the lake, where he places the site of the miracle. But this is quite unnecessary as well as untenable; as also is Wieseler's idea of a coasting voyage. For how could they be "in the midst of the sea" (Matt. xiv. 24) in that case?

Thomson again supposes that the disciples were to sail from Butaiha along the shore, in order to pick up their Master at this Bethsaida. But this supposition is liable to the same objection; besides that they would have been on a lee-shore the whole time, with scarce three miles in all to row. The wind would not have been *contrary* to them in this case, but upon their beam. And if Jesus desired privacy (Matt. xiv. 22, 23, John vi. 15), would He have taken the course round the head of the lake by which the multitudes would have themselves returned?

A difficulty again has been made of the double mention of Bethsaida and Capernaum as the point for which the disciples were to make. But the language is not precisely the same in each case. According to S. Mark, they were to go πρὸς Βηθσαϊδαν, *towards* or to Bethsaida. According to S. John, they went εἰς Καπερνούμ, *to* Capernaum. The former probably indicates the first direction; the latter, the ultimate destination.

The site of the western boundary is generally placed *above* Capernaum, upon the supposition that this is the one visited by S. Willibald on his road from Mejdel (Magdala) to Kherazeh (Chorazin), where it occurs between Capernaum and Chorazin. Robinson, too, assuming Khan Minyeh to be Capernaum, fixes upon Ain et Tabijah for Bethsaida. And in this I agree with him, though for different reasons. But Tel-Hûm seems now to be established as the site of Capernaum; and I see no

reason (certainly not from this narrative) why Bethsaida should not have been to the south of it.

Now, assuming that Ain et Tabijah is rightly assigned as the site of the western boundary, the narrative becomes perfectly natural and simple. Jesus being upon the north coast, towards the east, desires the disciples to sail over to the other side of the lake. The wind was contrary, i. e. it was a head-wind, and they were obliged to furl sail and row (John vi. 19). Their direction was south-west. This, therefore, was the quarter of the wind, which is proved by the fact of vessels coming at the time from *Tiberias* at the south-west to Butaiha.

S. John says the disciples had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, i. e. between four and five statute miles, and they were then in the midst of the sea. Now the distance from Butaiha to Ain et Tabigah is about five geographical (about six statute) miles; but owing to the wind they were probably still at some considerable distance from the shore, as it would cause them to make a somewhat circuitous route.

Now when they reached the shore, they found themselves on the land (or plain) of *Gennesareth*. Since then Capernaum was not in, but to the north of, this plain, it would certainly seem that Bethsaida was to the south of Capernaum. According to this statement, it is an additional fact of some significance that S. Mark speaks of "a city called Bethsaida," when alluding to Beth.Julias. And he seems thus to wish to distinguish it from that other which was known as the boundary of Galilee, "the city of Andrew and Peter" (S. John i. 44).

CHRONOLOGICAL
AND
GENEALOGICAL TABLES AND NOTES.

TABLE I.

THE JEWISH YEAR.

THE Jewish year is semi-solar, and consists of 12 or 13 months. Every month has 29 or 30 days. The intercalary month is inserted after Adar, and is called Ve-Adar.

		DAYS.
1. Tisri	has	30
2. Bul or Marchesvan	„	29 or 30
3. Cisleu	„	30 or 29
4. Thebet	„	29
5. Sebat	„	30
6. Adar	„	29
(Ve-Adar	„	29)
7. Nisan or Abib	„	30
8. Iyar or Zif	„	29
9. Sivan	„	30
10. Thammuz	„	29
11. Ab	„	30
12. Elul	„	29
(Or in Intercalary years	„	30)

N.B.—1. The Civil Year begins with Tisri, answering partly to September, partly to October.

2. When Marchesvan and Cisleu have each 30 days, the year is *full;* when the former has 30 and the latter 29, it is *deficient.*

TABLE II.

JEWISH CYCLE OF NINETEEN YEARS.

The 1st year begins about October 2nd, and has 12 months.

2nd	„	„	Sept.	22nd	„	12	„
3rd	„	„	„	10th	„	13	„
4th	„	„	„	29th	„	12	„
5th	„	„	„	19th	„	12	„
6th	„	„	„	8th	„	13	„
7th	„	„	„	27th	„	12	„
8th	„	„	„	16th	„	13	„
9th	„	„	Oct.	5th	„	12	„
10th	„	„	Sept.	25th	„	12	„
11th	„	„	„	14th	„	13	„
12th	„	„	Oct.	2nd	„	12	„
13th	„	„	Sept.	21st	„	12	„
14th	„	„	„	10th	„	13	„
15th	„	„	„	29th	„	12	„
16th	„	„	„	18th	„	12	„
17th	„	„	„	7th	„	13	„
18th	„	„	„	25th	„	12	„
19th	„	„	„	14th	„	13	„

N.B. The Judaic year = A.D. x + 3760 years, 3 months.

TABLE III.

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES.

1. Any year B.C. ÷ by 7 with remainder 2, is a Sabbatical Year.

Any year A.D. ÷ by 7 with r. 6, is a Sabbatical Year.

2. If the year of the Jewish Period be divided by 28, r. indicates the year of the Solar Cycle.

If by 19, r. = year of Lunar Cycle.

If by 7, r. denotes year of the Sabbatic Series.

If r. = 0, it is the 28th year of the Solar, 19th of the Lunar, and 9th of the Sabbatic Series.

3. The Epact denotes the excess of the Solar month and year over the Lunar month and year.

4. The Cycle of Indiction is obtained by adding 3 to the current year, and dividing by 15.

5. The Cycle of the Moon, Metonic Cycle, or Golden Numbers = a Period of 19 years, when the new and full moons return on the same day, but *not at the same hour.*

6. The Cycle of the Sun = a Period of 28 years, when the Dominical or Sunday letters return, and reproceed according to the Julian Calendar.

7. The Julian Period is the product of Nos. 4, 5, 6 multiplied together; i. e. $15 \times 19 \times 28 = 7980$.

RULES FOR CONVERSION OF YEARS.

a. If the given year is antecedent to the Christian Era, sub-

tract the number of the year in the Julian Period from 4714, and the remainder is the year B.C.

b. If the year is A.D. subtract 4713 from the year of the Julian Period, and the remainder is the year A.D., or

Add 4713 to year A.D. and the time is the year J.P.

c. If the year A.U.C. (i. e. from the foundation of the city of Rome) be less than 754, subtract the year from 754, and the remainder is the year B.C.

d. If the year A.U.C. be not less than 754, subtract 753 from the year, and the remainder is the year A.D.

TABLE IV.

JEWISH FEASTS, ETC., IN THE SEVERAL YEARS BELONGING TO THE HISTORY.

	B.C.		A.D.					
	5.	4.	8.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.
Passover	April 22.	April 10.	April 9.	April 21.	April 9.	March 29.	April 16.	April 5.
Pentecost	June 12.	May 31.	May 30.	June 11	May 30.	May 19.	June 6.	May 26.
Day of Atonement	Oct. 12.	Sept. 30.	Sept. 29.	Oct. 12.	Sept. 29.	Sept. 18.	Oct. 6.	Sept. 25.
Tabernacles	Oct. 17.	Oct. 5.	Oct. 4.	Oct. 17.	Oct. 4.	Sept. 23.	Oct. 11.	Sept. 30.
Dedication	Dec. 25.	Dec. 13.	Dec. 12.	Dec. 25.	Dec. 12.	Dec. 1.	Dec. 19.	Dec. 8.

N.B. The Passover in A.D. 26 is generally placed in March 21. But as it was a Ve-Adar or intercalary year, the proper date must be April, as above assigned. See Table V.

spread far and wide, that a
life by the mere word of the

The effect upon the minds
to derange all their plans for
been greatly marred by His
far removed from the centre
ence of the priestly party
the Pharisees of the north sh
liberality of the commercial
turbed by the new and silent
head around them. Upon
judged expedient to endeav
Jesus had manifestly acquire
the people by continued devi
Him in the light of an habit
and so to raise up the spir
would most surely tend to His

It was in this spirit and wi
despatched emissaries so early
to watch every word and act
representation. His wondro
ledge, however, enabled Him
these men, by proving inconte
the letter and the spirit of a fo
and (2) the authority which H
given (and was continually
setting aside mere forms, *a*
mercy were concerned.

The main difficulty, of cou
deal was the healing of dise
always been incurable by hu
the casting out of demons. V
resorted to of these differe

JEWISH FEASTS, ETC., IN THE SEVERAL YEARS BELONGING TO THE ...

	B.C.		A.D.					
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Day of commencement of Jewish year from A.D. 26 to A.D. 30 inclusive, according to the English calendar.

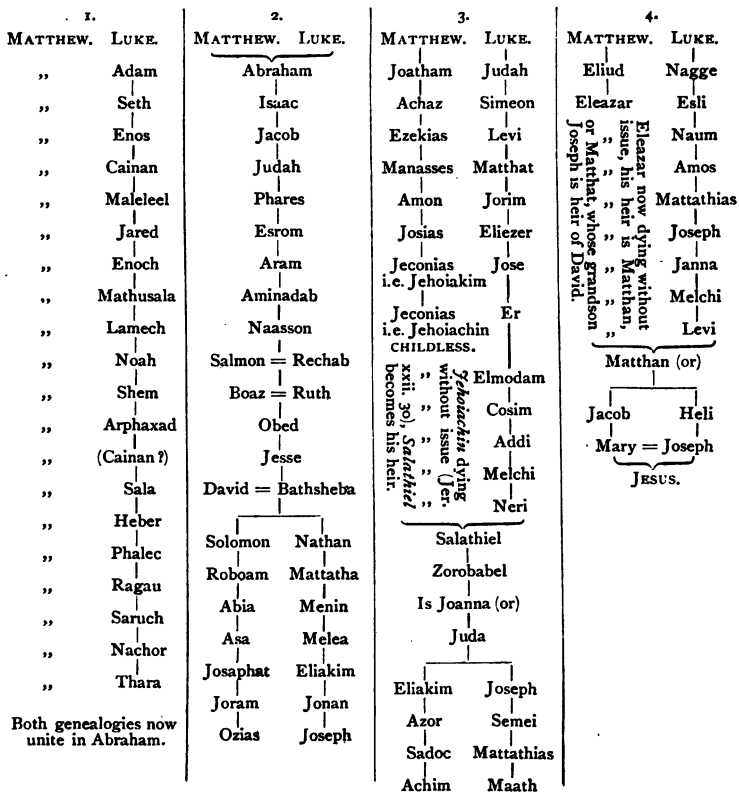
TABLE V.

	A.D. 26 A.U.C. 779 A.J.P. 4739	27 780 4740	28 781 4741	29 782 4742	30 783 4743
Sebat, 30 days.		Jan. 29.	Jan. 16.	Jan. 5.	Jan. 23.
Adar, 29.	March 10.	Feb. 28.	Feb. 15.	Feb. 4.	Feb. 22.
Ve-Adar, 29.	April 8.	. . .	. . .	March 5.	. . .
Nisan, 30.	May 8.	March 27.	March 16.	April 3.	March 23.
Iyar, 29.	June 6.	April 26.	April 15.	May 3.	
Sivan, 30.	July 6.	May 25.	May 14.	June 1.	
Thammuz, 29.	August 4.	June 24.	June 13.	July 1.	
Ab, 30.	Sept. 3.	July 23.	July 12.	July 30.	
Elul, 29.	Oct. 3.	August 22.	August 11.	August 28.	
Tisri, 30.	Nov. 2.	Sept. 20.	Sept. 9.	Sept. 27.	
Marchesvan, 29.	Dec. 1.	Oct. 20.	Oct. 9.	Oct. 27.	
Cisleu, 30.	Dec. 31.	Nov. 18.	Nov. 7.	Nov. 25.	
Thebet, 29.	(Intercalary year.)	Dec. 18. (Sabbatical year.)	Dec. 7.	Dec. 25. (Intercalary year.)	

Greswell appears to be in error as to the date of the Passover in A.D. 27, through not allowing for Elul in Ve-Adar year.

THE GENEALOGIES OF CHRIST RECONCILED.

(According to Lord A. Hervey.)



Jesus was, therefore, the last representative of the royal House of David, and with His death the succession of the royal line became extinct.

NOTE.

A SLIGHT rectification of the date of John's first baptism at Bethabara will be found in a note at the end of Vol. II. It was discovered too late for correction in Vol. I.

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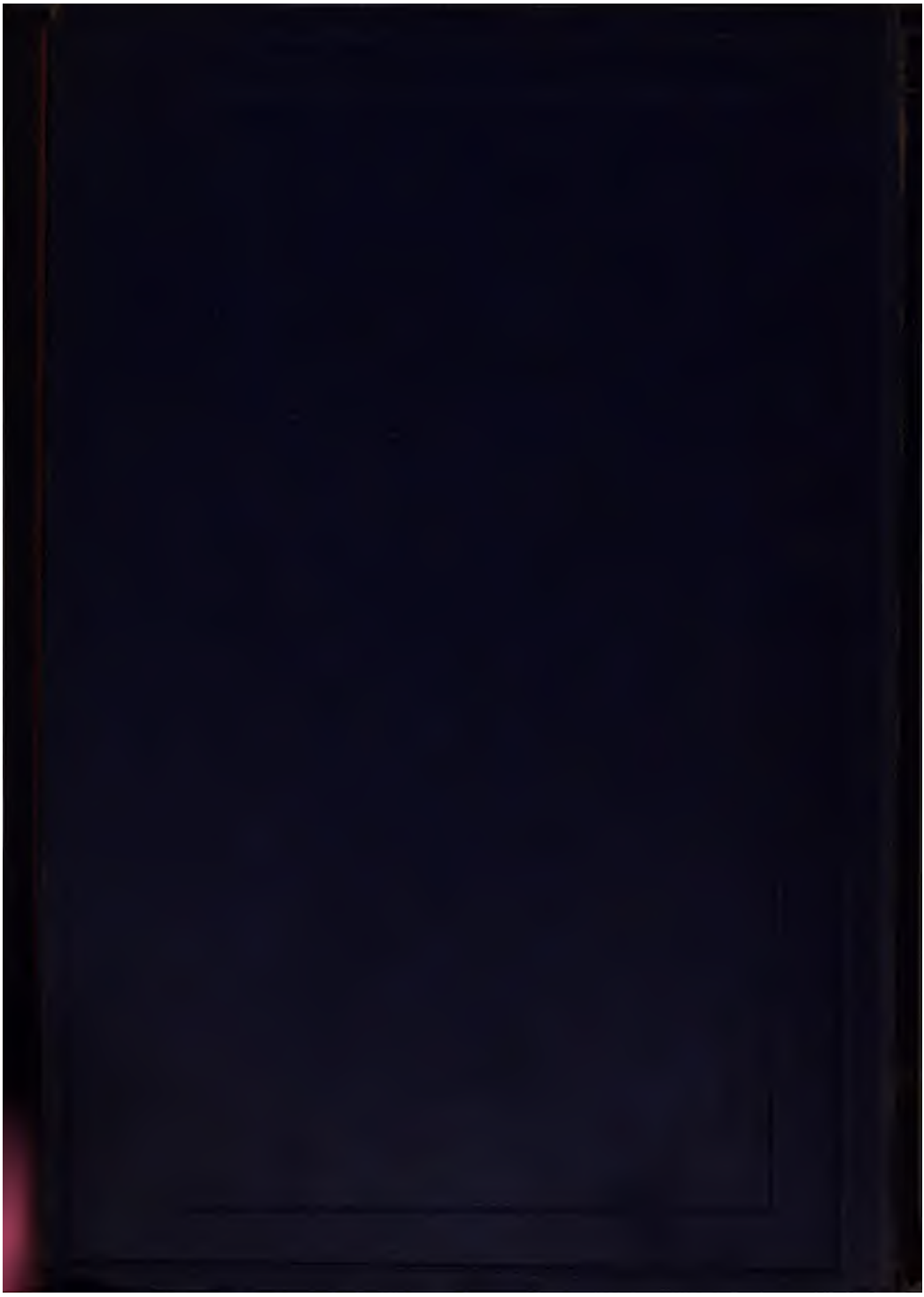
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